

**Proposal to Establish A New Nursing Education Program
Quest College in San Antonio, Texas
Vocational Nursing Education Program**

Summary of Request:

Consider the Quest College proposal to establish a new Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program in San Antonio, Texas and the survey visit report (See Attachment #1). The final proposal was provided electronically to members of the Texas Board of Nursing (Board).

Historical Perspective:

- Syllan Careers, Inc. doing business as Career Quest, was established in September 1995 by its founders/owners, Ms. Jeanne Riojas Martin and the late Mr. Harold Martin, who together had over 40 years of experience in career education. In October 1996, Career Quest was approved and licensed by the Texas Workforce Commission, Career Colleges and Colleges Division, and in January 1997, Career Quest began its first classes. In 2011, the corporate name was officially changed to Quest College, Inc.
- The college received national accreditation in September 1999 from the Commission of the Council on Occupational Education. The Commission reaffirmed accreditation on February 20, 2012 for the maximum additional period of six years.
- In January 2010, the Board approved the establishment of a new VN Education Program at Quest College and an initial cohort of 18 students was admitted in April 2010. The program achieved an NCLEX-PN® pass rate of 87.5% in 2011; however, following that time the program demonstrated a series of NCLEX-PN® pass rates below 80%. Quest College identified the turnover in VN Education Program Directors as a major contributing factor to the lowered pass rates. In January 2016, Quest College elected to close the VN Education Program. If the Quest College administration had not made this decision, Board Staff would have recommended withdrawal of approval to the Board at the April 2016 meeting based upon four consecutive years of the NCLEX-PN® examination pass rates falling below 80%.
- The current proposal explains that closure of the VN Education Program allowed Quest College to self-evaluate, re-organize, and rebuild an entirely new, robust program and curriculum. This program is designed to address the needs of the San Antonio community, the increasing complexity of nursing education, and the NCLEX-PN® competency expectations.
- Quest College offers the following healthcare certificate level programs: Nurse Aide Training and Competency Evaluation Program; Medical Assisting; Medical Assisting/ Phlebotomy/ EKG Technician Dual Program; and Patient Care Technician Program.
- A first draft of the proposal was received in the Board office in March 2017 and reviewed by Board Staff. Following Board Staff's recommendations, revised versions were received in July 2017 and in October 2017. The proposal was deemed complete in November 2017 and a site visit was conducted on December 19, 2017 by Education Consultants Virginia D. Ayars, EdD, MS, RN, CNE and Beverly Skloss, MSN, RN.

Summary of Proposal:

Overview of the Proposal:

- Quest College proposes to establish a new VN Education Program in San Antonio, Texas. The proposal requests enrollment of an initial cohort of 20 students in April 2018 with a continuing admission of 20 students every 12 weeks thereafter. This pattern would allow the Quest College VN Education Program to have a maximum program size of 60 students for 2018.
- The 66-week VN program includes 30 weeks of three pre-requisite courses and six cross-referenced, dual credit, inter-professional courses taught by nursing faculty; these nine courses may be completed in any order. The purpose of this structure is to build on existing traditional Nurse Aide and Patient Care Technician Programs currently offered by Quest College. Utilizing this model allows the college to evaluate prospective VN students prior to their entering the remaining 36-weeks of the VN Program. Students not accepted into the VN Program would be able to conclude their extern hours to complete the Nurse Aide or Patient Care Technician Programs.
- The three pre-requisite courses are: phlebotomy, electrocardiography, and health unit coordinator. The six cross-referenced, inter-professional courses are: anatomy and physiology, medical terminology and professional development, basic nursing skills, patient care skills, foundations of health professionals, and mental health/mental illness. After successful completion of these nine courses, the student will enter the second grouping of course work, the nursing courses, that will be provided in a linear progression during the next 36 weeks.
- The program is designed to be delivered through a face-to-face format including faculty-supervised hands-on skills laboratory and clinical learning experiences in a variety of healthcare facilities.
- Clinical learning experiences will be offered in the HealthSouth Rehabilitation Institute of San Antonio and the clinical agreement is in effect for all HealthSouth facilities in the area. Also, clinical contracts have been secured with Senior Care of Windcrest, a long-term care facility, and Brit-Tex Nursing Services, a home health agency.

Rationale and Need for the Program:

- The VN program will be offered at Quest College's campus located at 5430 Fredericksburg Road, Suite 310, San Antonio, Texas. The Quest College VN Program proposal presented the following five factors as evidence of need: community population and size; employment data from the US Department Bureau of Labor Statistics; underrepresentation of Hispanic/Latino LVNs; paraprofessional career path; and local employment need.
- The area to be served by graduates of the Quest College VN Program is San Antonio, Texas, a community of diverse ethnic, cultural, and economic characteristics. According to the 2016 census, San Antonio is the ninth largest city in the United States and the second largest in Texas.
- The Quest College VN Program builds upon each level of healthcare professional training from simple to complex and allows multiple exit points for students who are unable to complete the VN Program to still succeed within other paraprofessional roles. The Quest College proposal identifies two advantages to having this curriculum model: (1) the program would allow early exit students to fill a community employment need; and (2) as direct care workers seek to advance their career status, the curriculum would allow progression in the healthcare field.

- Four VN Programs are within a 25-mile radius of Quest College: Baptist Health System College of Health Professions, Brightwood College, Galen College of Nursing, and St. Philip's College.
- Quest College mailed 268 surveys to healthcare employers within the San Antonio community and 25 institutions or 9.3% responded. These employers had a combined number of 315 employed LVNs with 37 vacancies or 11.7%. Of these 25 employers, 17 (68%) indicated their paraprofessional staff would benefit from a program that awarded credit for nurse aide, patient care technician, and medical assistant training in a VN education program. These 25 employers anticipated hiring approximately 407 LVN's in the next five years and 100% of the respondents identified support for Quest College opening a VN program.
- Letters of endorsement from community leaders in the San Antonio area indicate support for the proposed VN program.

Administration and Organization:

- The Quest College VN Education Program supports the college's purpose of teaching and service to its students. The proposal sets forth that Quest College places a strong emphasis on work ethics, accountability, professionalism, and the individual's commitment in establishing and pursuing both personal and professional goals.
- The proposal describes the theoretical framework as encompassing the nursing paradigms of humankind, health, environment, nursing, learning, and education by delineating each curriculum concept into three domains: Health Care Concepts, Professional Nursing Concepts, and Clinical Judgments.
- The Quest College VN Program Director reports to the Quest College Director. The VN Program Director has the responsibility and full authority to administer all aspects of the program.
- Rebecca Zielinski, RN, director of the proposed program, meets the qualifications of Board Rule 214.6 to assume administrative leadership. Ms. Zielinski has 30 years of professional nursing experience, with 25 years as an education program administrator, and 11 years of experience teaching in a VN education program. Ms. Zielinski was approved to serve as the VN Program Director in December 2014 prior to the program closure in 2016.

Availability of Faculty and Clinical Sites:

- In October 2016, the San Antonio community experienced the closing of a large nursing education program. With that closure, many qualified faculty members were displaced. Quest College also has former faculty who have expressed a desire to return. With five faculty members currently in place, the hiring process for remaining new positions will begin upon Board approval of the VN program. Quest College will also utilize online recruiting services to search for qualified applicants.
- When all enrollment cycles are filled, the VN faculty team will consist of 10 full-time instructors. The proposal articulates that the faculty members should have sufficient time in their schedules to provide content mastery time (remediation) and graduate tracking.
- The proposed program will utilize selected clinical sites that should not impact the current use of clinical sites by other VN education programs in the San Antonio area. The program has secured contracts for clinical learning experiences with HealthSouth Rehabilitation, Senior Care of Windcrest, a long-term care facility, and Brit-Tex Nursing Services, a home health agency.

- Students will conduct observation experiences at the ARC of San Antonio that has two facilities offering life enrichment programs and care to pediatric clients with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Upon formal Board approval, Quest College will offer clinical rotations at local childbirth education programs and Rainbow Station that has two locations: Get Well Place Daycare and Guadalupe Home, a Mental Health/Mental Retardation group home for youth. In addition, simulated clinical learning experiences will be utilized in maternal/child and obstetrical nursing courses to meet learning objectives in these courses.
- The design and scheduling of the program allows the provision of clinical learning experiences two days a week at a facility for each of the three proposed cohorts, thus allowing the program to rotate the days with each cohort and minimize the program's impact on the clinical facilities in San Antonio.
- In an effort to work seamlessly with other nursing programs, Quest College sent communications to the other four VN Programs in San Antonio, receiving one response, which was positive. The Quest College VN Program Director is committed to working professionally with all nursing programs requiring clinical rotations in an effort to prevent potential overlapping with other programs in the use of clinical facilities.

Students:

- The identified admission pattern would allow Quest College to maintain three cohorts of VN students with 20 students in each cohort. Considering 25% attrition, the proposed VN program size at any given time would be no greater than 60 students. This cycle would continue for the next five years with expected repetition.
- Student recruitment would include presenting at career days at local high schools; newspaper, television, radio, and direct mail advertising; worksite referrals; and students who are currently enrolled or have previously graduated from one of Quest College's healthcare certificate programs.

Financial Support and Resources:

- The Quest College Board of Directors, as well as Quest College's owner, Jeanne Martin, stated strong support for the proposed VN Education Programs. In January 2017, the Board of Directors of Quest College approved a resolution to support the establishment of the VN Program and to provide both administrative and financial support.
- A budget for the first two years of operation for the Quest College VN Education Program was prepared by the administration and the VN Program Director. The budget includes funds allocated to director and faculty salaries, support staff salaries, skills laboratory equipment, media and instructor resources, medical supplies (consumable and non-consumable), and computers.
- The survey visit indicated that the requirements of Board Rule 214.11 regarding facilities, resources, and services are completely addressed in all categories.

Program of Study:

- Quest College's stated nursing philosophy explains that nursing education must be designed to train and supply competent individuals for the nursing workforce. Nursing is a profession that empowers individuals, families, groups, and communities to attain optimal wellness as they respond to changing health needs and altered health states. Nursing acknowledges the dignity, worth, and right of all individuals to have their health needs met.

- The VN curriculum is designed to assist the learner in meeting educational objectives and program outcomes. The major curriculum concepts integrated within the Quest College VN Education Program include the Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECs, 2010) for Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs. The VN curriculum prepares the nursing graduate for entry level VN practice as: Member of the Profession, Provider of Patient-Centered Care, Patient Safety Advocate, and Member of the Health Care Team. Both the didactic and clinical learning experiences include the associated knowledge, behaviors, and clinical judgments required for the achievement of each competency.
- The conceptual framework of the Quest College VN Program is comprised of the following eight concepts: communication, culture, basic human needs, safety, legal/ethical, prevention/health promotion, professionalism, and nursing process. The program and course objectives incorporate specific content related to professional values, ethics, safety, diversity, confidentiality, the Nursing Practice Act, and the Board rules and regulations.
- The Quest College VN curriculum offers a “wheel” format for prerequisite courses and a “linear” format for VN Courses. There are three pre-requisite courses: phlebotomy, electrocardiography, and health unit coordinator. The six cross-referenced, dual credit, inter-professional courses taught by nursing faculty are: anatomy and physiology, medical terminology and professional development, basic nursing skills, patient care skills, foundations of health professionals, and mental health/mental illness. After successful completion of these nine courses, the student progresses to the second grouping of course work, the nursing courses that are offered in a linear format.
- The proposed VN program is comprised of a total of 1460 contact hours. The curriculum includes 617 hours of didactic content, 326 hours of laboratory experiences, and 517 hours of clinical learning experiences.

Total Program Evaluation Plan:

- The focus for assessment efforts for the Quest College VN Program is in the collection and interpretation of data generated by the implementation of the Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan. The use of aggregated and trended data will be used for program development, maintenance, and/or revision.
- Assessment of outcome data will be completed at the end of each term and will indicate the need for any action to be taken. Processes include faculty meetings to review outcome data and revision to course objectives, syllabi, or resources to improve the next term’s outcomes.
- The TPE will also allow the program to develop, implement, evaluate, and revise the systematic method of monitoring student progression in the program, identify and implement strategies to enhance students’ success specific to the licensure examination, and revise student clinical performance evaluation tools to reflect the Quest College VN Program objectives and levels of knowledge progression.
- The program’s TPE is well-developed and provides measurable benchmarks of achievement. Detailed indicators of academic effectiveness and VN student learning outcomes are presented in the proposal. All required elements of Board Rule 214.13 are fully addressed.

Rationale for Recommendation:Pros:

- Ms. Rebecca Zielinski, the proposed VN Program Director, meets all requirements of Board Rule 214.6 to assume the leadership position. Ms. Zielinski is an experienced nurse educator and vocational nursing education program administrator.
- The administration has committed the resources to the implementation and maintenance of this new program.

Cons:

- The curriculum is untried and not in alignment with curricula offered at other VN Programs in the State of Texas.

Staff Recommendation:

Move to grant initial approval to Quest College to establish a new Vocational Nursing Education Program in San Antonio, Texas, and impose the conditions/requirements in the attached replacement Board Order (See Attachment #3).

STANDARD/CRITERIA	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
	<p>The school is in an accessible San Antonio location. The facility has adequate space for the projected number of 20 students and is adequately equipped. Ample parking and bus services are available.</p>	
<p>(b) An appropriately equipped skills laboratory shall be provided to accommodate the maximum number of students allowed for the program.</p> <p>(1) The laboratory shall be equipped with hot and cold running water.</p> <p>(2) The laboratory shall have adequate storage for equipment and supplies.</p>	<p>There is a basic nursing skills laboratory that could serve as a classroom, if needed. The lab will be used for teaching fundamental skills.</p> <p>In addition, a spacious nursing simulation lab is equipped with four traditional hospital cubicle spaces; four hospital beds; one high fidelity birthing mannequin, Noelle; one Vita-Sims mannequin; and one geriatric model.</p> <p>Also available are one radiant warmer, three infant mannequins, and one pediatric mannequin.</p> <p>There is one sink in the skills laboratory with hot and cold running water.</p> <p>Ample, locked storage space for equipment and supplies is provided.</p>	Criteria Met
<p>(c) The dean/director and faculty shall have adequate secretarial and clerical assistance to meet the needs of the program.</p>	<p>There will be one full time administrative assistant for the nursing program.</p>	Criteria Met
<p>(d) The physical facilities shall be adequate to meet the needs of the program in relation to the size of the faculty and the student body.</p> <p>(1) The dean/director shall have a private office.</p> <p>(2) Faculty offices shall be conveniently located and adequate in number and size to provide faculty with privacy for conferences with students and uninterrupted work.</p> <p>(3) Space for clerical staff, records, files, and equipment shall be adequate.</p> <p>(4) There shall be mechanisms which provide for the security of sensitive materials, such as examinations and health records.</p> <p>(5) Classrooms, laboratories, and conference rooms shall be conducive to learning and</p>	<p>The proposed Program Director, as well as the Assistant Program Director, have private offices. There are multiple private conference rooms available where faculty may meet with students.</p> <p>Faculty and clerical office space is provided in the administrative section of the nursing department. Space is designed so that faculty have convenient access to full resources and equipment.</p> <p>Quest College plans to keep records and reports in alignment with the Texas Board of Nursing rules, federal regulations, and the U. S. Department of Education rules. Security for sensitive records and materials is appropriate.</p>	Criteria Met

STANDARD/CRITERIA	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
<p>adequate in number, size, and type for the number of students and the educational purposes for which the rooms are used.</p> <p>(6) Teaching aids shall be provided to meet the objectives/outcomes of the program.</p> <p>(7) Adequate restrooms and lounges shall be provided convenient to the classroom.</p>	<p>The classrooms and labs are spacious, conducive to learning, and conference rooms are adequate.</p> <p>Student and faculty lounges and ADA accessible restrooms are conveniently located.</p>	
<p>(e) The learning resources, library, and departmental holdings shall be current, use contemporary technology appropriate for the level of the curriculum, and be sufficient for the size of the student body and the needs of the faculty.</p> <p>(1) Provisions shall be made for accessibility, availability, and timely delivery of information resources.</p> <p>(2) Facilities and policies shall promote effective use, i.e. environment, accessibility, and hours of operation.</p>	<p>Quest College has a dedicated nursing computer laboratory, with 28 computers. All classrooms are Smart Classrooms.</p> <p>Quest College maintains a learning resource center (Library) which contains reference texts and periodicals directly related to vocational nursing. The Library also has computer and internet access, for additional reference material to include an online library specific to nurse education (EBSCO's <i>CINAHL</i>®).</p> <p>Virtual Clinical Excursions for clinical skills will be utilized. The Share Point Plus learning management system is fully incorporated into the curriculum.</p> <p>Hours of operation are: 8 am to 7 pm, Monday through Friday.</p>	Criteria Met

Pros and Cons from Survey Visit:

Pros:

- Facilities, resources, and services are adequate to meet the needs of the proposed VN program.

Cons:

- None identified

DRAFT LETTER

January 22, 2018

Rebecca Zielinski, RN, Director
Vocational Nursing Education Program
Quest College
5430 Fredericksburg Road, Suite 300
San Antonio, Texas.

Dear Ms. Zielinski:

At the January 18-19, 2018 meeting, members of the Texas Board of Nursing discussed the Quest College Proposal to Establish a New Vocational Nursing Education Program in San Antonio, Texas, and the report of the December 19, 2017 survey visit. The Board wishes to thank you and Ms. Jeanne Martin for being present to answer questions. Based upon the discussion and review of documents, it was the decision of the Board to grant initial approval to Quest College to establish a new Vocational Nursing Education Program in San Antonio, Texas, and impose the condition and requirement in the attached Board Order.

We wish you success with the program. If you have questions, or if we may be of assistance, please contact Board Staff at 512-305-7660.

Sincerely,

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

Copy: Jeanne Martin, Quest College President
Texas Workforce Commission
Commission of the Council on Occupational Education

BEFORE THE TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING

ORDER OF THE BOARD

In the Matter of
Quest College
Vocational Nursing Education Program
In San Antonio, Texas

A public meeting of the Texas Board of Nursing, hereinafter referred to as the Board, was held on January 18, 2018, 333 Guadalupe, Tower II, Room 225, Austin, Texas, to consider the Quest College proposal to establish a new Vocational Nursing Education Program in San Antonio, Texas, based upon the review of the proposal and survey visit report, pursuant to Section 301.157, Texas Occupations Code and 22 Tex. Admin. Code Chapter 214.

After review and due consideration of the filed materials, as well as the presentation by the representatives from Quest College in San Antonio, Texas, and other interested parties, if any, the Board hereby grants INITIAL APPROVAL of the Quest College Vocational Nursing Education Program in San Antonio, Texas and imposes the following conditions and requirements:

1. The program shall not admit more than one (1) cohort of twenty (20) students in April 2018 and one (1) cohort of twenty (20) students each subsequent twelve (12) week period until the program achieves Full Approval from the Board.
2. Prior to the start of each twelve (12) week session, the program director shall submit for Board Staff approval a list of all program faculty members and the number of enrolled students for the upcoming session.
3. The program shall submit for Board Staff approval a list of each nursing course outcome (pass or fail) for all enrolled students. The de-identified student outcome list shall be submitted to Board Staff no later than ten (10) days following the date of the end of each course.
4. The program shall submit for Board Staff approval a comprehensive Remediation Plan to timely assist unsuccessful students no later than ten (10) days following the date of the end of each course.
5. The program shall submit for Board Staff approval a plan for students who are unable to pass a course(s) no later than ten (10) days following the date of the end of each course.

Failure to satisfy the above conditions or any requirement set forth in 22 Tex. Admin. Code Chapter 214 for continued approval will result in the program's approval status being re-evaluated by the Board at the next available Board meeting.

Entered this 18th day of January, 2018

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