

**Report of Survey Visit to
Blinn College in Brenham, Texas
Vocational Nursing Education Program**

Summary of Request:

Consider the report of the November 14, 2017 routine survey visit to Blinn College Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program in Brenham, Texas. This routine survey visit was conducted by Education Consultant Susan Lee, PhD, RN, CNE. The previous survey visit was November 2012.

Historical Perspective:

- Blinn College VN Education Program in Brenham, Texas began in 1961 with the first class graduating in 1962. Since then, 972 students have completed the VN program on the Brenham campus. The college currently has four campuses: the home campus in Brenham; extension campuses in Schulenburg and Sealy; and the main campus in Bryan.
- Blinn College is accredited by Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACS-COC). The most recent reaffirmation was in 2015, with the next reaffirmation in 2025. Blinn College has a certificate of authority from Texas Higher Education Coordination Board (THECB).
- Within the Health Sciences Program, the VN and Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN)-to-Registered Nurse (RN) Transition Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) Education Program, and Health Information Technology (HIT) are offered on the Brenham campus. A Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) program is also offered on this campus.
- Michelle Marburger, MSN, RN, has served as the program director since 2005, teaching in the VN education program for seven years prior to that. She has 29 years of experience in nursing education, patient care across the lifespan, management, and staff supervision.
- 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	100%	23/23
2015	Full	100%	17/17
2014	Full	95.00%	19/20

2013	Full	100%	19/19
2012	Full	100%	14/14

Summary of Survey Findings (See Attachment #1):

Positive Aspects of Survey Visit:

- Michelle Marburger, MSN, RN, the VN Program Director, has overseen the VN program as Program Director since 2005.
- The Program Director is an experienced leader who is focused on VN education and student success. She currently teaches a full course load and manages a clinical group.
- Administration expressed support for the VN program and acknowledged it fulfills a need for VNs in the community.
- Students interviewed expressed satisfaction with the program, stating the faculty are supportive and caring.
- The program of study incorporates various methods for course delivery, including PowerPoint presentations, group quizzes, online tutorials and case study programs, face-to-face instruction, role playing, games, class support, medication administration labs, and simulation.
- Clinical learning experiences are faculty-supervised in a 1:10 ratio of faculty to students with hands-on direct-patient care in clinical settings. The program utilizes preceptors, simulation and skills labs.
- The program has a variety of active contracts with clinical affiliating agencies that provide clinical learning experiences.
- VN graduates are able to obtain employment in the local and surrounding areas including acute care hospitals, clinics, memory units, dialysis, hospice, rehabilitation facilities, home health, 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). Faculty are able to attend campus-wide teaching seminars.

Concerns of Survey Visit:

- The VN program instruction is carried out by the director, and two full-time and one part-time faculty who is shared with the CNA program. The director teaches didactic and clinical courses 24 hours per week in addition to her duties and responsibilities as director of the VN program. Ms. Marburger is also the director of the CNA program.
- Faculty report they routinely work late and on the weekends to fulfill faculty responsibilities.
- Two faculty share one office, which is in a high-traffic area, making it difficult to meet privately with students and secure confidential items, such as student exams and grades.
- Test blueprints do not include cognitive levels in any of the domains of Bloom's taxonomy.
- The administrative assistant is shared between the VN, CNA, and HIT programs.

Staff Rationale for Recommendation #1:

Rule 214.11. (d). (2) states, "Faculty offices shall be conveniently located and adequate in number and size to provide faculty with privacy for conferences with students and uninterrupted work." During the survey visit, Board Staff noted that there is high traffic in the shared office, with one faculty working in a very small space and being frequently interrupted. Faculty commented that it is difficult to meet privately to counsel students or to secure items, such as student exams and grades. Currently, when faculty need to meet with a student, the other faculty is forced to leave or another office is used, necessitating that faculty leave to allow privacy.

Recommendation #1:

Administration is encouraged to locate additional office space to relocate the faculty who is in the high-traffic area and to provide additional privacy for student meetings and security for student information and exams.

Staff Rationale for Recommendation #2:

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 #2:

The program is encouraged to develop exams and blueprints noting 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 August 1, 2018.

Staff Rationale for Recommendation #3:

Rule 214.11(c) states, "The director/coordinator and faculty shall have adequate secretarial and clerical assistance to meet the needs of the program." During the survey visit, the statement was made to Board Staff that the current administrative assistant is shared between the VN, CNA, and HIT programs, making it difficult to focus on the needs of the VN program.

Recommendation #3:

Administration is encouraged to employ additional secretarial and clerical assistant to meet VN education program needs.

Staff Recommendation:

Move to accept the report of the November 14, 2017 survey visit to Blinn College Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program in Brenham, Texas and issue the recommendations in the attached letter (see Attachment #2).

**Summary of Survey Visit to
Blinn College in Brenham, Texas
Vocational Nursing Education Program**

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

Date of Visit: November 14, 2017

Board Staff Conducting Survey Visit: Susan Lee, PhD, RN, CNE, Education Consultant

Program Evaluator met with:

- Mary Hensley, Ed.D, Chancellor of the Blinn College District
- Karen M. Buck, MEd, Vice Chancellor, Administration and Operations
- Thomas Lescarbeau, Dean of Health Sciences
- Michelle Marburger, MSN, RN, Director of Vocational Nursing
- Donna Fricke, BSN, RN, VN Program Faculty
- Mary Lange, RN, VN Program Faculty
- Shannon, Wellman, RN, VN and CNA Program Faculty
- 24 Vocational Nursing 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 2017 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 Blinn College Organization Chart as part of Health Sciences Programs, along with Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN); and Health Information Technology. Blinn College also offers a Dual Credit CNA program.
- The VN program is offered in Bryan and Brenham, Texas.
- Michelle Marburger, MSN, RN, was appointed director of the VN and CNA programs in

2005. Her past experiences include fifteen years in pre-licensure nursing education, having served as faculty in the VN program since 1998.

- Ms. Marburger carries a full teaching assignment (classroom, skills lab, and clinical) in addition to her administrative duties and responsibilities in the VN and CNA programs.

Program of Study:

- The full-time, 10-month program of study is designed to be completed in 3 semesters. One cohort is admitted annually in August.
- The program is comprised of a total of 1433 clock hours: 592 didactic hours and 841 clinical hours.
- The program of study includes all Board required content.
- The organization of the curriculum is based upon sequential learning, with the first semester laying the foundation for the program.
- The majority of skills are front loaded in the first semester. The curriculum includes Intravenous (IV) therapy.
- *The Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECS) (2010)* are incorporated into the curriculum.
- The teaching model is based upon face-to-face classes combined with one hybrid (Health Science), and one online (Growth and Development) course. Teaching methods include lectures with PowerPoints, case studies, interactive quizzes, and online NCLEX® test practice preparation.
- Faculty and students receive training in distance education and IT support is available.
- Students expressed that the syllabi and instruction are effective, sharing that the faculty demonstrate caring.
- Test blueprints do not identify cognitive levels in any of the domains of Bloom's taxonomy.
- Standardized testing is used throughout the program for progression and remediation. High-stakes standardized testing is not used for graduation purposes. Tutoring is provided before and after classes, along with one-to-one focused tutorials and unit exam reviews.

Faculty:

- Two full-time and one part-time faculty teach in the VN program. At the time of the survey visit, there were no faculty vacancies.
- The faculty is a stable, cohesive group of individuals who have been with the program from two to 10 years.
- Faculty are comprised of experienced nurses in the area of teaching. Faculty are diverse in content expertise and clinical backgrounds.
- VN faculty workload is 15 load hours with additional 10-12 overload hours per semester in Fall, Spring, and Summer. 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, skills lab, and simulation, one load hour is equivalent to one hour of actual clinical time.
- Faculty members are actively engaged in curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation for their courses, and serve on the department curriculum committee.

- Faculty development includes attendance at the Texas Association of Vocational Nurse Educators (TAVNE) annual conference, and campus-wide teaching seminars.
- Three 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.
- Faculty has regular monthly meetings with decisions reached by consensus. Faculty meeting minutes include faculty actions and rationale.
- Evaluation methods include student evaluations of instruction after each course, and annual director-conducted and self-evaluations of faculty. Interrater reliability is ensured as all faculty and the program director review grading strategies and rubrics before and after evaluating students.

Students:

- The program admits one cohort per year into the program, in August. The number admitted varies based on the number of qualified applicants. The program has the capacity to admit thirty (30) students annually. In August 2017, 27 students were admitted from an applicant pool of 45 qualified candidates.
- At the time of the survey visit, 25 students were in the first semester of the program and are scheduled to graduate in June 2018. 24 students were available for interview.
- Students reported they enrolled in the VN program because this program is close to home, it is well-loved, high NCLEX-PN® pass rates, and it has a good history and reputation.
- Students cited challenges as balancing eight classes at the same time. Reasons given for attrition are: health and family issues.
- Students acknowledged faculty are available to assist students with tutoring, exam review, and remediation.
- Student policies are well-defined, written, and available to students, and include admission, progression, mobility/articulation, and dismissal.
- There are seven class officers who represent the students.
- 24 students were interviewed.
- The majority of the students plan to continue their educations, with 21 indicating their desire to obtain a ADN. Most of the students plan to stay in the community after graduation.

Clinical Learning Experiences:

- The program has active clinical contracts with 25 affiliating agencies (e.g. rehabilitation, long-term care, hospitals, senior activity centers, school districts, dialysis centers, summer camp, women's health clinics, physician's offices, and hospice/home health) that provide a variety of clinical learning experiences to meet the objectives and outcomes of the curriculum.
- The VN students have opportunities to participate in simulated experiences. The simulation/skills lab is equipped with three programmable and five low-fidelity mannequins, task trainers, oxygen and suction, nine hospital beds, medication dispensers, and hot and cold running water. The faculty stated there are adequate supplies and equipment. The lab is shared with the CNA program. Virtual IV 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 with signed agreements. There are written procedures for orienting and working with preceptors.
- Clinical learning experiences 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.

Facilities, Resources, and Services:

- A full array of student services is offered on the Blinn College campus in Brenham. There is a library on the campus and students have 24-hour access to online resources.
- Computer resources, and a student retention coordinator are available on campus.
- A full array of student services is offered, including restrooms, faculty and student lounges, break areas, study areas, and a snack bar.
- There is ample, open parking available adjacent to the program building.
- The program director and one full-time faculty have a furnished private office.
- One full-time and one part-time faculty share a furnished office.
- The VN program classroom and the nine-bed nursing skills laboratory are spacious and equipped. Several mannequins and simulation models are available for instructional purposes in the skills lab.
- One program assistant provides clerical and secretarial support to the VN program, however, her time is also shared with the HIT program and the dual credit CNA program.
- The program director indicated that resources are adequate to meet teaching needs.

Records and Reports:

- Faculty files provide evidence of faculty qualifications, official transcripts, immunizations, current cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certification, an orientation checklist, and performance appraisals.
- Student files include signed counseling acknowledgements, signed Student Handbook receipts, clearance of criminal background checks, degree plans, and evaluations of skills competencies.
- The budget includes faculty salaries, travel and conference expenses, membership dues, testing and assessment costs, subscriptions and periodicals, and consumables.
- The program has a Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan that is used for decision making.
- Meeting minutes consistently reflect implementation of the TPE. The faculty meet every month, sometimes with the Bryan campus faculty. The community advisory committee meets every six months and the curriculum committee meets as needed.
- Student files contain all documents required by Rule 214.
- Clinical affiliation agreements are current.
- Files are locked and stored in a secure area as required in Rule 214.

DRAFT LETTER

January 18, 2018

Michelle Marburger, MSN, RN, Director
Vocational Nursing Education Program
Blinn College
902 College Avenue
Brenham, TX 77833

Dear Ms. Marburger:

At the January 18, 2018 meeting, members of the Texas Board of Nursing (Board) considered the report of the November 14, 2017 survey visit to Blinn College Vocational Nursing Education Program in Brenham, Texas. It was the decision of the Board to accept the report of the survey visit and impose the following recommendations:

Recommendations:

1. Recommendation #1:
Administration is encouraged to locate additional office space to relocate the faculty who is in the high-traffic area and to provide additional privacy for student meetings and security for student information and exams.
2. Recommendation #2:
The program is encouraged to develop exams and blueprints noting 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 August 1, 2018.
3. Recommendation #3:
Administration is encouraged to employ additional secretarial and clerical assistant to meet VN education program needs.

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: Thomas Lescarbeau, Dean of Health Sciences