

**Consideration of Change in Approval Status  
 From Full Approval with Warning to Full Approval  
 University of Texas Rio Grande Valley in Edinburg, Texas  
 Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program**

**Summary of Request:**

Consider the proposed change in approval status for the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) Baccalaureate Degree Nursing (BSN) Education Program in Edinburg, Texas, from Full Approval with Warning to Full Approval based upon the 2017 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate and compliance with Rule 215.

**Historical Perspective:**

- UTRGV in Edinburg, Texas was created by action of the Texas Legislature in 2013 and began operation on August 31, 2015.
- Formal regional accreditation of UTRGV was granted by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) in 2015. Currently, UTRGV is on Probation and the next SACSCOC reaffirmation will be in 2019.
- Two universities, the University of Texas at Brownsville in Brownsville and the University of Texas – Pan American (UTPA) in Edinburg, joined resources and assets to form the UTRGV BSN Education Program.
- The UTRGV BSN Program was accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) under the new name on December 18, 2015. The CCNE accreditation term expires on December 31, 2021.
- Carolina Huerta, EdD, RN, FAAN has served as School of Nursing Director since the founding of UTRGV. Dr. Huerta previously served as Chair of the UTPA BSN Program, having been with UTPA since 1972. Dr. Sandy Sanchez is the UTRGV BSN Program under-graduate Program Director.
- The NCLEX-RN® examination pass rates for UTRGV for the past three years are included in the table below:

<b>Examination Year</b>	<b>BON Approval Status</b>	<b>NCLEX-RN® Examination Pass Rate</b>	<b>Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)</b>
2017	Full with Warning	92.48%	123/133
2016	Full	73.20%	142/194
2015	Full	78.26%	72/92

- Due to the UTRGV 2015 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate of 78.26%, the Program Director and faculty were required to submit a Self-Study Report (SSR) in 2016 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 June 15, 2016. 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:
  - Review optimal cohort size;
  - Revisit Readmission policy;
  - Integrate social media with traditional teaching strategies;
  - Develop comprehensive, ongoing remediation program throughout curriculum;
  - Expand recruitment efforts for seasoned faculty members;
  - Evaluate faculty salary;
  - Use curriculum mapping and standardized exam results to guide teaching;
  - Schedule regular course team meetings;
  - Increase inter-rater reliability; and
  - Revisit Total Program Evaluation plan.
- The approval status for the UTRGV BSN Program was changed from Full to Full with Warning at the January 2017 Board meeting.
- A survey visit to the UTRGV BSN Program was conducted on April 25, 2017 pursuant to the January 19, 2017 Board Order. The survey visit was conducted by Beverly Skloss, MSN, RN, Contract Program Evaluator.
- The Board formally accepted the report of the survey visit to the UTRGV BSN Program at the July 2017 Board meeting.

**Rationale for Recommendations:**

The program has demonstrated a pass rate for first-time candidates of at least 80% on the 2017 NCLEX-RN® examination and is currently in full compliance with Rule 215.

**Staff Recommendation:**

Move to change the approval status for the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program in Edinburg, Texas, from Full Approval with Warning to Full Approval based upon the 2017 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 22, 2018

Carolina Huerta, EdD, RN, FAAN  
School of Nursing Director  
University of Texas Rio Grande Valley  
1201 West University Drive  
Edinburg, Texas

Dear Dr. Huerta:

At the January 18-19, 2018 meeting, members of the Texas Board of Nursing (Board) discussed the approval status for the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program in Edinburg, Texas, based upon the 2017 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate 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 Texas Rio Grande Valley Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program in Edinburg, Texas, from Full 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](mailto:Virginia.ayars@bon.texas.gov) or 512-305-7660.

Sincerely,

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

Copy: Guy Bailey, PhD, President, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley  
Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education

**BEFORE THE TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING**

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**ORDER OF THE BOARD**

In the Matter of  
University of Texas Rio Grande Valley  
Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program  
In Edinburg, 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 approval status for the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program in Edinburg, Texas, pursuant to Section 301.157, Texas Occupations Code and 22 Tex. Admin. Code Chapter 215, based upon the 2017 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 Texas Rio Grande Valley in Edinburg, Texas, and other interested parties, if any, the Board hereby CHANGES the approval status for the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program in Edinburg, Texas from FULL APPROVAL WITH WARNING to FULL APPROVAL.

Entered this 18<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2018

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