

**Report of Survey Visit to
Texas Health School in Houston, Texas
Vocational Nursing Education Program**

Summary of Request:

Consider the report of the May 8, 2018 survey visit to Texas Health School (THS) Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program in Houston, Texas. This survey visit was conducted by Education Consultants Susan Lee, PhD, RN, CNE and Beverly Skloss, MSN, RN subsequent to moving to full approval and to ensure the continued success of the program.

Historical Perspective:

- THS was established in Houston in 2002 offering specialized training programs needed to address the increasing demand for skilled healthcare professionals. THS began classes on April 10, 2003 at 10565 Katy Freeway (in West Houston on the I-10 Corridor) and moved to 11211 Katy Freeway during the summer of 2004. Initially, the school offered the Nurse Aide, Medical Assistant, and Physical Therapy Aide Programs. In 2004 the Medication Aide Program was added and approval for the Massage Therapy Program was granted in 2004. THS submitted a proposal to the Board to establish a VN program in December 2015 and was approved at the April 2016 Board meeting.
- On March 29, 2016, prior to VN Education Program approval, a site visit was conducted by Board Contract Program Evaluator Beverly Skloss, MSN, RN.
- THS was awarded national accreditation on February 15, 2005 by the Commission of the Council on Occupational Education (COE), a national accrediting agency recognized by the United States Department of Education. The last COE accreditation team visit was October 3-6, 2016, with reaffirmation scheduled for October 2022.
- THS is approved by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). On April 20, 2018, TWC ensured the school may continue to operate under the previous Certificate of Approval.
- Diane E. Friend, RN, MS, CDONA/LTC became the Program Director in January 2017. The program has had three program directors since it was approved in 2016.
- The NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate for the past year was 100% (10/10). The approval status was changed to full approval at the April 2018 Board meeting.

Summary of Survey Findings (See Attachment #1):

Positive Aspects Identified During Survey Visit:

- Diane E. Friend, RN, MS, CDONA/LTC, Program Director of the VN Education Program, has overseen the VN program since 2017. She teaches Leadership and NCLEX Prep for six to eight hours per week. Ms. Friend, who has been a nurse for 17 years, is experienced in nursing education, leadership, geriatrics, pediatrics, oncology, infection control, and long-term care. Ms. Friend enrolled in a Doctorate of Education program in 2015.
- Students interviewed said they chose this program for:

- its small classes,
- the set schedule (Monday – Friday, 8a – 5p),
- one course offered at a time,
- faculty and staff,
- proximity to home, and
- 11-month program.
- Clinical learning experiences are faculty-supervised in a 1:10 ratio of faculty to students with hands-on direct-patient care in clinical settings and in simulation and skills lab activities. Preceptors are not used. All clinical sites are located within 15 miles of THS.
- The program has four active contracts with clinical affiliating agencies that provide clinical learning experiences.
- VN graduates are able to obtain employment in the surrounding areas in long term care, home health, schools, and clinics.

Concerns Identified During Survey Visit:

- Test blueprints indicated that 40% of test items are at lower cognitive levels (e.g. knowledge) in the domains of Bloom’s taxonomy.
- Faculty reported that workload policy requires 40 hours per week with 30 of those hours in student contact and 10 hours allotted to fulfill additional faculty responsibilities. Nursing program committees, such as standing committees, membership, and duties are not mentioned in the faculty handbook. There is a pattern of frequent faculty turnover, which may be attributed to workload.
- There is insufficient equipment (head wall unit) in the simulation and skills labs to provide a full range of learning opportunities for the number of students enrolled.
- There are no hands-on clinical learning experiences in the Maternal/Child Health course as learning is conducted using 100% simulation.
- Clearance on criminal background checks/declaratory orders is not required until the third and final semester, which may not allow students sufficient opportunity to gain clearance prior to program completion.
- No professional development or faculty workshops are provided to ensure faculty are current on teaching/learning strategies and practice.
- There is no dedicated administrative assistant for the VN program.

Board Staff identified the following areas of concern for immediate attention by the program:

- Lack of hands-on clinical learning experiences for Maternity Nursing
- Inadequate secretarial and clerical assistance for the VN program

Board Staff Rationale for Requirement #1:

Maternity clinical learning experiences are currently provided as 100% simulation lab. Rule 214.9(c) requires the inclusion of hands-on patient care experiences in settings, such as maternity clinics, in-patient units providing care for maternity patients, and newborn nurseries. The NCSBN Simulation Study recommended that simulation may be a substitute for up to 50% of clinical practice for each clinical area. Education Guideline 3.8.6.a. supports the NCSBN recommendation.

Requirement #1:

The program will ensure that simulation is used for not more than 50% of clinical learning experiences in any clinical course and that hands-on patient care with actual patients is incorporated into all clinical courses. The program shall provide revised clinical, skills lab, and simulation schedules to Board Staff no later than October 31, 2018.

Staff Rationale for Requirement #2:

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 comment was made that the current administrative assistant is shared between the VN and PTA programs, administration, and admissions, making it difficult to focus on the needs of the VN program.

Requirement #2:

Administration shall submit to Board Staff evidence of plans to employ secretarial and clerical assistance to meet the needs of the program no later than October 31, 2018.

Staff Rationale for Recommendation #1:

The simulation lab does not have adequate equipment for the number of enrolled students with only one headwall unit. Rule 214.11(b) states, "An appropriate equipped skills laboratory shall be provided to accommodate the maximum number of students allowed for the program".

Recommendation #1:

The program shall identify and implement corrective measures that will provide for skills lab to have adequate equipment (headwall unit), and will provide this information to Board Staff no later than October 31, 2018.

Staff Recommendation:

Move to accept the report of the May 8, 2018 survey visit to Texas Health School Vocational Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas and issue the requirements and recommendation in the attached letter and Board Order (see Attachment #2).

**Summary of Survey Visit to
Texas Health School in Houston, Texas
Vocational Nursing Education Program**

Purpose of Survey Visit: This survey visit was conducted subsequent to moving to full approval and to ensure the continued success of the program.

Date of Visit: May 8, 2018

Board Staff Conducting Survey Visit: Education Consultants Susan Lee, PhD, RN, CNE, and Beverly Skloss, MSN, RN

Program Evaluator met with:

- Jody Hawk, President
- David Hawk, Vice President
- Diane E. Friend, RN, MS, CDONA/LTC, Program Director VN Education Program
- Sharon Williams, LVN, Program Faculty
- Georgia Butler, RN, MS, Program Faculty
- Randall Wittman, ADN, RN, Program Faculty
- Four Vocational Nursing Students

Program Evaluator:

- held initial conference with President;
- reviewed the curriculum and all syllabi;
- reviewed the Student Handbook, Faculty Handbook and Academic Catalog;
- reviewed the clinical evaluation tools and 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; and
- conducted exit interview with administrators and program director.

Summary of Findings:

Administration and Organization:

- Administration indicated the nursing program meets the need for educating vocational nurses for the local area.
- The VN program is included in the THS Organization Chart, along with Nurse Aide, Medical Assistant, Physical Therapy Technician, Medication Aide and Massage Therapy programs.
- Diane E. Friend, RN, MS, CDONA/LTC, Program Director of the VN Education Program, has overseen the VN program since 2017. She teaches the NCLEX Prep for a total of 18

hours per semester. Ms. Friend, who has been a nurse for 17 years, is experienced in nursing education, leadership, geriatrics, pediatrics, oncology, infection control and long-term care. Ms. Friend began a Doctorate of Education program in 2015.

Program of Study:

- The three semester, 48-week program of study is designed to be delivered through a face-to-face format including faculty-supervised skills laboratory with clinical learning experiences in a variety of healthcare facilities.
- The program of study includes all Board required content.
- The didactic instruction correlates to clinical and lab learning activities.
- *The Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECS)* (2010) are incorporated into the curriculum as evidenced in the syllabi.
- Teaching occurs on weekdays face-to-face delivery, which includes lecture, interactive games, PowerPoint presentations, student projects, question/answer, and videos. For clinical, skills and simulation labs, methods of instruction include demonstration/return demonstration, videos, virtual clinical excursions, participation packets, and hands-on practice including direct patient care.
- Students expressed that the acronyms, songs, dances, fun interactive games, and drawing body systems on t-shirts has helped them retain information.
- Test blueprints across the curriculum indicated that up to 40% of test items were written at the lower cognitive levels (knowledge and comprehension) in the domains of Bloom's taxonomy. A majority of NCLEX items are written at the application level to evaluate candidates' decision-making ability. Board Staff encouraged the program to follow Education Guideline 3.7.3.a. that provides suggestions for planning, developing, and implementing evaluation processes to measure progression of students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor achievement in course objectives.
- Didactic learning experiences are provided prior to related clinical learning experiences.

Faculty:

- One full-time and five part-time faculty teach in the VN program. At the time of the survey visit, there were no faculty vacancies.
- Faculty are comprised of experienced nurses who meet Board Rule 214 requirements.
- VN full-time faculty workload policy in the Faculty Handbook requires a 40-hour work week, with 30 of the hours in student contact. Work responsibilities include class preparation and evaluation; supervising students in theory, lab, instruction, and clinical learning experiences; guidance and counseling; and committee work. Board Staff reminded the Administrators and Program Director that Rule 214.7(a)(4) states, "Written policies for nursing faculty workload shall allow sufficient time for faculty to accomplish those activities related to the teaching-learning process", and that they should reevaluate the effectiveness of the workload policy.
- Faculty policies are in place per BON requirement. Written policies regarding faculty include: developing, implementing and evaluating the curriculum; faculty qualifications; terms of employment; student/faculty grievances; and faculty meeting participation; professional development; and participation in the Total Program Evaluation. Faculty

workload is not well-defined in the Faculty Handbook; and nursing program committees, such as standing committees, membership, and duties are not mentioned.

- Professional development includes in-service/professional growth activities, such as school-sponsored faculty gatherings that feature speakers on a subject that will improve classroom effectiveness. Nursing faculty indicated they would benefit from more faculty development programs related to teaching strategies in nursing education, item writing, and test analysis.
- Three VN program faculty members were available for the interview.
- Faculty meetings are held twice per year and as needed. Minutes document faculty participation in academic policies and procedures; curriculum review and revision; and actions taken. Graduates of the VN program are invited to participate and provide recommendations, and suggestions.
- Evaluation methods include student evaluations of faculty, course and clinical rotations; faculty evaluations of clinical sites; and director evaluations of faculty.

Students:

- In October 2016, 12 students were admitted from an applicant pool of 12 qualified candidates. In September 2017, 10 students graduated. One of the two students who did not graduate with the original cohort re-enrolled and is continuing in the program. Currently, 46 students are enrolled in classes with 14 students in Semester I, 18 students in Semester II, and 14 students in Semester III.
- Four students were available for the interview. The students hope to obtain employment in school nursing, private duty, hospice care, and other facilities.
- Students interviewed said they chose this program because it is 11 months in length, close to home, has small classes, has one course at a time, and because the faculty and staff are nice and helpful.
- Students cited the only challenges as traffic in Houston that can delay the otherwise short commute.
- Student policies are well-defined, written, and available to students, and include attendance; dress code; admission; progression; graduation; probation; and dismissal. Information is also available in the Student Handbook regarding student evaluations of courses and faculty; NCLEX-PN licensure eligibility; and criminal background checks.
- The program does not enforce that students have cleared the criminal background checks until the third and final semester of the program. Students needing to file declaratory orders late in their program may be delayed in taking the NCLEX examination, reducing their likelihood of passing. Board Staff in the Examination Department strongly, strongly recommend requiring a clear criminal background before a student is enrolled in a program.
- Student representatives are selected and voted upon by the student body of the VN program. Representatives attend faculty meetings and community functions; participate in monthly student meetings; present issues or concerns of the students at faculty meetings.

Clinical Learning Experiences:

- The program has active clinical contracts with four affiliating agencies (e.g. acute care, long-term care) that provide a variety of clinical learning experiences to meet the objectives and outcomes of the curriculum. Criteria for selecting clinical agencies are well-defined.
- Currently, the Maternity Nursing clinical experiences are all conducted in the simulation lab with no hands-on clinical learning experiences with actual patients.
- As required by rule, the clinical learning experiences correlate with didactic content. There is one computer/lecture classroom, a skills lab/lecture classroom with two patient care areas and two mid-fidelity manikins; and a medication lab skills lab. The lab does not have adequate equipment for the number of enrolled students. The Program Director specifically noted the need for another head wall unit for student learning. There is hot and cold running water. Ample supplies, space, and storage space for equipment and supplies is provided.
- Faculty provides supervision during all clinical learning experiences and maintains BON required ratios with one faculty to ten students for clinical and simulation activities. Clinical preceptors are not used.
- Evaluation tools include formative and summative evaluations throughout the program for both didactic and clinical courses. These are progressive, based upon course content, and incorporate the DEC's, as reflected in the syllabi.

Facilities, Resources, and Services:

- Facilities and services include a computer/lecture classroom, a skills lab/lecture classroom with two patient care areas and two mid-fidelity manikins; a medication lab skills lab; three lecture classrooms; a private office for the program director and a group office for faculty; support staff offices; a student break room; storage room; and ADA restrooms.
- There is ample parking and bus services are accessible.
- The Houston Public Library is utilized for student and faculty access to nursing databases. THS has subscriptions to American Journal of Nursing, Nursing Made Easy, and Nursing 2018.
- The program director and faculty do not have dedicated administrative assistance or secretarial support for the VN program.
- Ms. Friend indicated that when supplies or equipment are needed, financial resources are available.

Records and Reports:

- Faculty files provide verification of licensure; curricula vitae; employment contract; evaluations; immunization records; official transcripts, and certifications.
- Student files include applications; acceptance letter; signed acknowledgement forms (i.e. Student Handbook, orientation, release forms, confidentiality); BON eligibility information; transcripts; certifications; immunizations; and advising. Student files contain all documents required by Rule 214.
- The budget includes salaries, consumables and lab supplies, books, classroom/lab equipment, maintenance, media services, student testing, and student liability insurance.

- The program has a Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan, which includes general requirements; philosophy/mission and objectives/outcomes; organization/administration of program; faculty; students; program of study; clinical learning experiences; facilities, resources, and services; records and reports; and total evaluation plan and instruments.
- Clinical affiliation agreements are current.
- Files are locked and stored in a secure area as required in Rule 214.

DRAFT LETTER

July 19, 2018

Diane E. Friend, RN, MS, CDONA/LTC, Program Director
Vocational Nursing Education Program
Texas Health School
11211 Katy Freeway, Suite 170
Houston, Texas 77079-2106

Dear Ms. Friend:

At the July 19, 2018 meeting, members of the Texas Board of Nursing (Board) considered the report of the May 8, 2018 survey visit to Texas Health School Vocational Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas. It was the decision of the Board to accept the report of the May 8, 2018 survey visit to Texas Health School Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program in Houston, Texas and impose the requirements and recommendation in the attached Board Order.

Requirements are mandatory criteria based upon program assessment directly related to the rules that must be addressed in the manner prescribed.

A Recommendation is a suggestion 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: Jody Hawk, Texas Health School President
Council on Occupational Education

BEFORE THE TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING

ORDER OF THE BOARD

In the Matter of
Texas Health School
Vocational Nursing Education Program
In Houston, Texas

A public meeting of the Texas Board of Nursing, hereinafter referred to as the Board, was held on July 19, 2018, 333 Guadalupe, Tower II, Room 225, Austin, Texas, to consider the report of the May 8, 2018 survey visit to Texas Health School Vocational Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas, pursuant to Section 301.157, Texas Occupations Code and 22 Tex. Admin. Code Chapter 214, based upon compliance with Rule 214.

After review and due consideration of the filed materials, the Board hereby ACCEPTS the report of the survey visit to Texas Health School Vocational Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas and hereby imposes the following recommendations, and requirements:

Recommendation:

1. Recommendation #1:

The program shall identify and implement corrective measures that will provide for skills lab to have adequate equipment (headwall unit), and will provide this information to Board Staff no later than October 31, 2018.

Requirements:

1. Requirement #1:

The program will ensure that simulation is used for not more than 50% of clinical learning experiences in any clinical course and that hands-on patient care with actual patients is incorporated into all clinical courses. The program shall provide revised clinical, skills lab, and simulation schedules to Board Staff no later than October 31, 2018.

2. Requirement #2:

Administration shall submit to Board Staff evidence of plans to employ secretarial and clerical assistance to meet the needs of the program no later than October 31, 2018.

Entered this 19th day of July, 2018

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