

**Report of Survey Visit
Concorde Career College in Grand Prairie, Texas
Vocational Nursing Education Program**

Summary of Request:

- Consider the report of the May 18, 2017 survey visit to the Concorde Career College (CCC) Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program in Grand Prairie, Texas, pursuant to the April, 2017 Board Order. The last survey visit that was previously conducted was on August 15, 2013.

Historical Perspective:

- The CCC Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program has been in operation since 1996.
- CCC has two sites: a main campus in Grand Prairie and an extension site in Dallas. This survey visit was conducted at the Grand Prairie campus. The annual examination pass rate is calculated as one for both campuses.
- The program was nationally accredited by the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES) from 1998 to 2013. In 2013, the institutional accreditation transitioned to the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges (ACCSC) and currently remains in good standing.
- Since 2009, five changes in the position of Director of the Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program have occurred. Debra Hawkins, MSN, RN is the current director and has been in this position since March 2014, bringing consistency to the role.
- The program's NCLEX-PN® examination pass rates have been unstable.
- The program was placed on Conditional Approval status at the April 2017 Board meeting and is restricted from enrolling new students.
- The NCLEX-PN® examination pass rates for the past five years are provided in the table below:

Examination Year	BON Approval Status	NCLEX-PN® Examination Pass Rate	Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)
2016	Full with Warning	79.65%	137/172
2015	Full	79.13%	182/230
2014	Full	77.22%	178/213
2013	Full	83.57%	178/213
2012	Full	76.35%	184/241

- The program submitted a Self-Study Report (SSR) in 2015 for the 2014 NCLEX-PN® pass rate in which they identified the following areas for correction:
 - revise admission requirements, including standardized testing criteria;
 - strengthen grading criteria to ensure that academic rigor is maintained;
 - improve use of item analysis data by faculty to foster improvement in testing and classroom instruction by providing faculty workshops on test writing;

- strengthen student policies related to remediation and use of university-provided success services; utilize standardized examination resources throughout the curriculum;
- improve use of summative evaluation data (standardized examination summaries, NCLEX performance data) to foster program improvement; and
- continuously monitor the program by addressing components of the Total Program Evaluation Plan at monthly program meetings.
- The program evaluated the effects of corrective measures in 2016 with the following findings:
 - admission standards revised to include higher scores on entrance examinations;
 - item analysis actualized by faculty for all exams;
 - examinations developed to follow the NCLEX blue print and include more alternate type questions;
 - weekly instructor reports completed and given to the director for high-risk students and to develop individualized plans;
 - program using standardized examinations and incorporating scores into course grades; and
 - conducting monthly faculty meetings to continuously monitor the program as well as student progress.

Summary of Survey Findings:

- A survey visit was conducted to the Concorde Career College VN Nursing Education Program on May 18, 2017.
- Findings from the survey visit are detailed in Attachment #1.

Pros and Cons from Survey Visit:

Pros:

- After a history of several program directors, the current Program Director has brought stability to the program having been in her position since 2014.
- The Program Director has an open-door policy, works closely with the faculty, and makes frequent visits both to the classrooms and clinical sites.

Cons:

- There is not a Nursing Faculty Handbook with policies and procedures specific to VN nursing faculty. Being a paperless campus, all policies are located on the intranet system. This makes it difficult, particularly for new faculty, to find information that is specific to the VN program.
- There is no separate VN Student Handbook. The program relies upon policies for nursing students in the college catalog. It was noted that the VN program in the course catalog is not under the heading *Nursing*, but under *Vocational*. A student would need to search for *Vocational* and then search further for specific information in the general catalog that may be specific to nursing such as attendance, finger-printing, etc.
- The VN Program Director stated that when a student fails an examination, they are required to see either the director or assistant director to review their exam with them and then must attend tutoring. Presently, there is not a policy statement regarding tutoring/remediation nor is there a mention of this in the current syllabi.

Staff Rationale:

Board Staff has provided rationale for the requirements in the Board Order below:

Staff Rationale for Requirement #1:

Rule 214.7(a) lists numerous faculty policies that must be available in a written form, usually in a Nursing Faculty Handbook. In addition, Rule 214.7(o) describes requirements for the nursing faculty organization with faculty organization policies, also usually included in the Nursing Faculty Handbook. The lack of available policies and processes limits consistency in program function.

Therefore, the program shall submit to Board Staff a Faculty Handbook that contains all of the components set forth in Rule 214.7 no later than September 1, 2017.

Staff Rationale for Requirement #2:

Rule 214.8(d-g) outlines many policy requirements that must be provided to students and are usually included in a Nursing Student Handbook. The lack of a Nursing Student Handbook limits the availability of information and consistency in processes with students.

Therefore, the program shall submit to Board Staff a Student Handbook that contains all of the components set forth in Rule 214.8(d-g) no later than September 1, 2017.

Staff Rationale for Requirement #3:

Rule 214.8(c) states, "The program of study shall have well-defined, written nursing student policies based upon statutory and Board requirements, including nursing student admission, dismissal, progression, and graduation policies that shall be developed, implemented, and enforced." Rule 214.8(c)(2) further states, "Nursing student policies which differ from those of the governing entity shall be in writing and shall be made available to faculty and students."

Therefore, the program shall submit to Board Staff written policies related to exam failures as well as any other nursing policies that are different from those of the governing entity no later than September 1, 2017.

Staff Rationale for Requirement #4:

Rule 214.5(b) states, program objectives "shall reflect, the *Differentiated Essential Competencies of Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs* (DECs) . . .".

Therefore, the program shall submit to Board Staff program outcomes and course objectives that fully address the DECs for VNs no later than September 1, 2017.

Staff Rationale for Requirement #5:

Rule 214.13(a) states that ". . .the (Total Program Evaluation) plan shall include evaluative criteria, methodology, frequency of evaluation, assignment of responsibility, and indicators (benchmarks) of program and instructional effectiveness.

Therefore, the program shall submit to Board Staff a Total Program Evaluation Plan that includes all of the criteria required in Rule 214.13(a) no later than September 1, 2017.

Staff Recommendation:

Move to accept the report of findings of the survey visit to the Concorde Career College Vocational Nursing Education Program in Grand Prairie, Texas, and impose the requirements/conditions indicated in the attached letter and Board Order (See Attachment #2).

**Summary of Survey Visit
Concorde Career College in Grand Prairie, Texas
Vocational Nursing Education Program**

Purpose of Survey visit: Board required survey visit

Date of Visit: May 18, 2017

Board Staff Conducting Visit: Education Consultants Gayle Varnell, PhD, APRN, CPNP-PC

Education Consultant met with:

Debra Hawkins, MSN, RN, Director
Erik Stephan, MBA, Academic Dean
Mike Lovejoy, Med, Campus President
Ferquita Stokes, MSN-ED, RN, Regional Dean of Nursing
Anne Coutinho, BSN, RN, Assistant Director of Nursing
Ade Fasoro, BSN, RN, VN Faculty
Richard Beard, MSN, RN, VN Faculty
Debra Modica, RN, VN Faculty
Shalonda Cooper, BSN, RN, VN Faculty
Marcia Smith, BSN, RN, VN Faculty
Evie Martin, BSN, RN, VN Faculty
Rose Elam, MSN, RN, VN Faculty

Education Consultant:

- reviewed the curriculum and all syllabi;
- reviewed the Concorde Career College Catalog;
- reviewed examinations and clinical evaluation tools;
- toured campus and facilities housing the nursing program;
- interviewed 39 VN students;
- held initial conference with the Director;
- met with seven faculty members;
- reviewed records and documents including: student and faculty files, minutes of faculty meetings, and the Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan; and
- conducted exit interview with Director, faculty, and administration.

Summary of Findings:

Administration:

- Board staff met with the Director, Campus President, Academic Dean, and Regional Dean of Nursing to discuss the VN Program at Concorde College and again at the end of the day during closing remarks.
- There is strong administrative and faculty support for the VN program. Administration has been working very closely with the Program Director to address all of the items identified in the Self-Study Report.

- Administration indicated the nursing program is in alignment with the school's mission, vision, and values. The program adds worth to the school and continues to meet a need for increased numbers of professional nurses in the local community.
- In addition to the VN Program, CCC offers the following programs: Dental Assistant, Dental Hygiene, Medical Assistant, Medical Office Administration, Neurodiagnostic Technology, Physical Therapist Assistant, Polysomnographic Technology, Respiratory Therapy, and Surgical Technology
- Debra Hawkins, MSN, RN, has served as the director of the VN Program since 2014.
- The Director does not carry a teaching load.

Program of Study:

- The program is one year in length and consists of five 10-week terms in the full-time day program. In the part-time evening/weekend program, each term is 16 weeks with a total of 80 instructional weeks.
- There are 645 didactic hours, 168 skills lab hours, and 787 clinical hours in the program of study.
- *The Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECS) (2010)* have not been fully incorporated into the program of study or the curriculum.
 - The program of study states that the "Concorde Vocational Nursing program graduates will: . . . Implement the Vocational Nursing roles of provider of care, health care team member, and member of the profession." There is no mention of the care being "patient-centered" or being a "Patient Safety Advocate."
 - In reviewing the course syllabi, there are no course objectives in the didactic courses that address the DECS.
- When the program wrote their Self-Study Report, the program stated that they used the one specific standardized examination vendor and planned to increase the passing score and incorporate the proctored examinations in certain courses. The program recently began using a different vendor prior to graduation and in certain courses. The next graduating cohort will be the first students to have used a single vendor throughout their program.
- Students do not receive authorization to apply for licensure until satisfactory performance on the vendor-provided exit examination.
- Remediation mechanisms have not been incorporated into written policies.

Faculty:

- There are 17 full-time and 23 part-time faculty on the main campus and seven full-time and three part-time faculty on the Dallas campus to maintain the one to 10 ratio in clinical courses.
- The faculty meets Board qualifications and offers diversity in their cultural, educational, and clinical backgrounds. The majority of faculty members are experienced nurse educators.
- Faculty meetings are held on a regular basis and review of faculty meeting minutes revealed documentation for actions.
- There is not a Nursing Faculty Handbook which means written policies are not readily available to faculty.

Students:

- The program is on Conditional Approval status until the program demonstrates a pass rate for first-time candidates of at least 80% on the NCLEX-PN® examination.
- There are 306 students currently enrolled in the VN Program

	Grand Prairie	Dallas Campus	Total
Enrollment	240	66	306
2017 Graduation	122	37	159

- Students reported they enrolled in the VN Program because there was no waiting list and they could enroll quickly.
- Students voiced concern over the program being on Conditional Approval status and how it would affect them when seeking employment.
- The majority of students interviewed expressed plans to further their education.
- Student policies are difficult to locate within the Concorde main catalog. There is no Nursing Student Handbook.
- Although students have input into the program via course, faculty, and program evaluations, the students interviewed stated that they do not feel that their concerns have been fully addressed. Students voiced concerns of having to personally pay for printouts of power point lectures and having to reuse disposable equipment in the skills lab.

Clinical Learning Experiences:

- The program has active clinical contracts with a variety of affiliating agencies that provide clinical learning opportunities.
- The clinical evaluation tool that is currently being used is a single document that tracks the students' progress through Quarters # 2-4.
- Skills lab and simulation lab activities are utilized prior to hands-on patient care experiences in Quarter #1. According to the students interviewed, some of the disposable equipment is used multiple times and this is a frustration of the students as well as the condition of some of the teaching equipment used for injections.
- Faculty provide supervision during all clinical learning experiences.
- Board required faculty-to-student ratios in the clinical areas are maintained.

Facilities, Resources, and Services:

- The facilities housing the VN Program are spacious and equipped with numerous audio-visual equipped classrooms, student study areas, and a computer lab.
- The Program Director, as well as assistant director have a fully equipped private office.
- The nursing faculty have private cubicles that are fully furnished. There are ample private offices to meet with students in private.
- The program has full-time clerical and secretarial support.

Records and Reports:

- Concorde utilizes a paperless system and faculty and student records are maintained online.
- The Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan, copies of the Nursing Education Program Information Surveys, Compliance Audits for Nursing Education Programs, and faculty minutes are kept in the Program Director's office in a locked cabinet.
- The TPE Implementation column did not include dates and was lacking in detail regarding decisions made.

- Faculty files contain all documents required by Rule 214.7(c).
- Clinical affiliation agreements are current and easily accessible.
- Storage of files meets the requirement of Rule 214.12.

Draft Letter

July 21, 2017

Debbie Hawkins, MSN, RN
Director, Vocational Nursing Education Program
Concorde Career College
3015 Interstate 20
Grand Prairie, TX 75052

Dear Ms. Hawkins:

At the July 20-21, 2017 meeting, members of the Texas Board of Nursing (Board) considered the report of the survey visit to the Concorde Career College Vocational Nursing Education Program in Grand Prairie, Texas. It was the decision of the Board to accept the report of the survey visit and impose the requirements/conditions as indicated in the attached Board Order.

If you have any questions or if we may offer assistance, please contact Board Staff at 512-621-5179 or gayle.varnell@bon.texas.gov.

Sincerely,

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

Copy: Mike Lovejoy, M.Ed, Campus President
Ferquita Stokes, MSN-ED, RN, Regional Dean of Nursing
Texas Workforce Commission

BEFORE THE TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING

In the Matter of:

Concorde Career College
Vocational Nursing Education Program
In Grand Prairie, Texas

ORDER OF THE BOARD

A public meeting of the Texas Board of Nursing, hereinafter referred to as the Board, was held on July 20-21, 2017, 333 Guadalupe, Tower II, Room 225, Austin, Texas to consider the survey visit to the Concorde Career College Vocational Nursing Education Program in Grand Prairie, Texas, based upon Board action at the April 2017 meeting pursuant to Section 301.157, Texas Occupations Code and 22 Tex. Admin. Code Chapter 214, and based upon findings from the May 18, 2017 survey visit.

After review and due consideration of the filed materials, as well as the presentation by representatives from Concorde Career College Vocational Nursing Education Program in Grand Prairie, Texas, and other interested parties, if any, the Board hereby ACCEPTS the report of the survey visit to the Concorde Career College Vocational Nursing Education Program in Grand Prairie, Texas, and hereby imposes the following requirements/conditions:

1. The program shall submit to Board Staff a Faculty Handbook that contains at least all of the components set forth in Rule 214.7(a) no later than September 1, 2017;
2. The program shall submit to Board Staff a Student Nursing Handbook that contains at least all of the components set forth in Rule 214.8(d-g) no later than September 1, 2017;
3. The program shall submit to Board Staff written policies related to exam failures as well as any other nursing policies that are different from those of the governing entity no later than September 1, 2017;
4. The program shall submit to Board Staff program outcomes and course objectives that fully address the DEC's for VNs no later than September 1, 2017; and
5. The program shall submit to Board Staff a TPE that includes all of the above criteria no later than September 1, 2017.

Entered this 20th day of July, 2017

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