

**Report of Application of a New Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program  
in a Public Junior College  
Del Mar College in Corpus Christi, Texas**

**Background:**

- Senate Bill 2118 passed by the 85(R) Texas Legislative Session allowed the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to authorize certain public junior colleges to offer baccalaureate degree programs, including nursing. The bill allows public junior colleges that meet the requirements in SB 2118 to seek approval from THECB and from the Texas Board of Nursing (BON) [Sec. 130.305(b)(2)].
- Staff from the BON and THECB have developed a collaborative process to handle applications from community colleges interested in establishing a baccalaureate degree nursing (BSN) education program.
- The first application/proposal received by both agencies was submitted by Austin Community College in Austin, Texas, was approved, and has begun operation. Further applications/proposals reviewed and approved were from:
  - Grayson College in Denison, Texas;
  - Collin College in McKinney, Texas;
  - Laredo College in Laredo, Texas;
  - South Texas College in McAllen, Texas;
  - Lone Star College in The Woodlands, Texas; and
  - Weatherford College in Weatherford, Texas.

**Proposal from Del Mar College in Corpus Christi, Texas:**

- A proposal to launch a Registered Nurse (RN)-to-BSN Program at Del Mar College (DMC) in Corpus Christi, Texas, was received in the Board office on October 28, 2019. It was reviewed by Janice I. Hooper, PhD, RN, FRE, CNE, FAAN, ANEF, and Beverly Skloss, MSN, RN, and found to be in alignment with Rule 215.
- DMC, founded in 1935, is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, and approved by THECB. The Associate Degree Nursing Education (ADN) Program is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN).
- The NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate for the ADN Program for the past three years has been between 93.10% and 94.44%.

- The proposal articulates the following reasons to offer the RN-to-BSN Program:
  - To provide an opportunity for RNs in the Rio Grande region to enroll in an RN-to-BSN program in a familiar educational setting who might not pursue the advanced degree in another setting.
  - The graduate and current student survey revealed that potential students agreed that earning the BSN would have a positive effect on their career path.
  - Three acute care systems in the Corpus Christi area indicated a preference for hiring nurses with advanced degrees because they possess higher-level nursing skill sets in critical thinking, analysis of data, and collaboration of care, which is required to ensure increased patient safety and improved patient outcomes.
  - Qualified nursing applicants being turned away from RN to BSN programs, yet there is clearly a need for more BSN-prepared nurses, particularly in the Rio Grande region of the state.
  
- The proposed Program Director for the RN-to-BSN program is Jennifer McWha, PhD, RN, who currently directs the ADN Program, and authored the proposal.
  
- The RN-to-BSN Program, using a hybrid format, plans to enroll 30 students each fall semester beginning in Fall 2020 with a full-time, three-semester, 12-month track. A part-time option is designed for the future.
  
- All student policies required by Rule 215 will be available to the RN-to-BSN students in a Student Handbook designed specifically for this program.
  
- DMC has a total of 25 ADN faculty. Six of the doctorally-prepared faculty members will be teaching in the RN-to-BSN Program at least 50% of the time while continuing to teach in the ADN Program. All courses will be team taught.
  
- The nursing programs are housed in the Department of Nurse Education (DNE). A three-building Health Science Complex is shared by the Departments of Allied Health, Dental and Imaging Technology, and Human Science and Education.
  
- The proposed degree plan consists of 54 semester credit hours (SCH) of general education coursework, that includes the Texas Core Curriculum (42 SCH), 12 additional SCH of program required courses and 36 SCH of ADN education. The last 30 SCH will be baccalaureate level nursing courses delivered using a concept-based approach.
  
- Clinical learning experiences are designed to meet the community and leadership competencies. Community nursing assignments include completing a windshield assessment, a family/community assessment, weekly reflective journaling, and presenting an educational class at a selected location in the community. The Leadership clinical will use a mentorship model in which the student will collaborate with a nurse manager or nursing director.

- The achievement of end of program learning objectives on the clinical evaluation tools is based on behaviors at the BSN level of performance. Faculty are responsible for instruction, assessment, and supervision of students.
- The Total Program Evaluation will follow the ACEN systematic evaluation plan template. DMC will begin the candidacy process with the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) after the program is approved by THECB. Submission of candidacy documents would occur summer or early fall 2020 with on-site visit subsequent per ACEN directives.
- DMC meets the requirements of Board Rule 215 and Board Staff recommended approval of the program to THECB.

This report is for information only. No action is required.