

**REPORT OF SURVEY VISIT  
 HOWARD COLLEGE AT BIG SPRING  
 VOCATIONAL NURSING EDUCATION PROGRAM**

**SUMMARY OF REQUEST:**

Consider the findings from the December 7, 2006 survey visit of the Howard College at Big Spring Vocational Nursing Education Program and the staff recommendation concerning commendation, recommendations and requirements to be met based on these findings.

**HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:**

Year	Approval Status	NCLEX-PN® Pass Rate	Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)
2005	Full	87.50%	14/16
2004	Full	100%	14/14
2003	Full	100%	11/11

- Board staff last conducted a site visit in September 2000 and carried out a compliance audit in 2004.
- Program's current director, Margaret Davidson, RN was appointed to the position in 2002 but had been on faculty with the program since 1994.

**SUMMARY OF SURVEY VISIT:**

Janice I. Hooper, PhD, RN, Betty Sims, MSN, RN, and Virginia Ayars, BSN, RN conducted a regular six-year survey visit on December 7, 2006 (See Attachment #1).

Board staff:

- Met with the College Administrators:
  - Dr. Cheryl Sparks, President,
  - Jamie Peterson, Workforce Dean,
  - Jeri Farmer, Health Professions Division Director,
  - Linda Schafer, Instructor,
  - Jessica Greni, Nursing Program Director;
- Interviewed Margaret Davidson, RN, Program Director;
- Interviewed nursing students and nursing faculty;
- Reviewed records and documents;
- Conducted a summary conference with the College Administrators, the VN Program Director, and the nursing faculty. Faculty and director from San Angelo joined the conference via telephone connection.

**PROS AND CONS:**

Pros-

- Graduates' performance on the NCLEX-PN examination has consistently been very high.
- The curriculum is well-organized and educationally sound.
- The director and faculty are very committed to the success of the students.

Cons-

- The organizational structure of Howard College at San Angelo and at Big Spring is complicated and confusing. The lines of authority and communication between the nursing programs at both campuses are different even though the VN programs use exactly the same curriculum and program documents. Directors and faculty are uncertain about lines of authority and the flow of communications, as well as the relationship between the two VN programs.
- Even though Howard College VN Programs at San Angelo and Big Spring are separate programs with separate NCLEX testing codes, they have attempted to function as if they are one program. This arrangement has made it

difficult for either program to make changes in curriculum or process due to the distance between campuses and infrequent opportunities for faculty meetings.

- All required written faculty policies are not included in the Faculty Handbook.
- One clinical site presently being used only has an average daily patient census of 7.8.
- Faculty did not demonstrate strong familiarity with Rule 214.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Move to accept the report of the survey visit of Howard College at Big Spring Vocational Nursing Education Program and issue the commendation, recommendations and requirements to be met based on the outcome of the survey visit, as indicated in the attached letter (Attachment #2).

**BOARD OF NURSE EXAMINERS FOR THE STATE OF TEXAS**  
**SURVEY VISIT REPORT**  
 (VN Education Programs)

NAME OF NURSING PROGRAM: Howard College - Big Spring  
 DIRECTOR OR COORDINATOR: Margaret Davidson, RN

DATE APPOINTED: 8/15/02

REASON FOR BNE SURVEY: Six Year Visit

DATES: December 7, 2006

SURVEY VISITOR(S): Virginia Ayars, BSN, RN; Janice Hooper, PhD, RN; Betty Sims, MSN, RN

BNE APPROVAL STATUS: Full

DATE OF LAST BNE SURVEY VISIT: September 20, 2000

OTHER (Name of Accrediting Agency):

VOLUNTARY ACCREDITATION:

NLNAC: YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO x \_\_\_\_\_ PERIOD OF ACCREDITATION: From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

TYPE OF ACCREDITATION (Initial, Full, Warning, etc.)

DATE OF MOST RECENT VISIT:

OTHER (Name of Accrediting Agency): SACS

STANDARD/CRITERIA	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
<b>§214.1 General Requirements</b>		
(a) The Director or Coordinator and faculty are accountable for complying with the Board's rules and regulations and the Nursing Practice Act.	It was not evident that the director and faculty member are adequately familiar with Rule 214.	Recommendation #1: Director and faculty are encouraged to implement an activity to review Rule 214.
<b>§ 214.4 Approval</b>		
(c)(2)(A) Eighty percent (80%) of first-time candidates who complete the program of study are required to achieve a passing score on the NCLEX-PN examination.	NCLEX-PN Exam Pass Rates: 2005 - 87.50% (14/16) 2004 - 100% (17) 2003 - 100% (11)	Criterion met.

STANDARD/CRITERIA	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
<b>§ 214.5 Philosophy/Mission and Objectives/Outcomes</b>		
(a) The philosophy/mission and objectives/outcomes of the vocational nursing education program shall be consistent with the philosophy/mission of the controlling agency. They shall reflect the diversity of the community served and shall be consistent with professional, educational, and ethical standards of nursing.	There are different philosophies for the VN and ADN programs. A restructuring in the organization chart might suggest a combined philosophy at Big Spring or the faculty could support separate philosophies. This is one of many decisions dependent upon the organizational structure. Consistency is present in the flow of objectives through the curriculum.	Criterion met.
(b) Program objectives/outcomes derived from the philosophy/mission shall reflect the <i>Differentiated Entry Level Competencies of Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs, Vocational (VN), Diploma/Associate Degree (Dip/ADN), Baccalaureate (BSN), September 2002.</i>	Board staff reviewed a table showing the location of DELC objectives through curriculum.	Criterion met.
(c) Clinical objectives/outcomes shall be stated in behavioral terms and shall serve as a mechanism for evaluating student progression.	Clinical objectives provide the basis for the clinical evaluation tools and for evaluating clinical performance.	Criterion met.
(d) The conceptual framework shall provide the organization of major concepts from the philosophy/mission of the program that provides the underlying structure or theme of the curriculum and facilitates the achievement of program objectives/outcomes.	A conceptual framework provides many concepts as a basis for curriculum objectives.	Criterion met.
(e) The faculty shall periodically review the philosophy/mission and objectives/outcomes and shall make appropriate revisions to maintain currency.	Faculty minutes documented faculty review of philosophy and objectives.	Criterion met.

STANDARD/CRITERIA	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
<p><b>§ 214.6 Administration and Organization</b></p>		
<p>(a) The controlling agency shall be licensed or accredited by a Board-recognized agency.</p> <p>(b) There shall be an organizational chart indicating lines of authority between the vocational nursing education program and the controlling agency.</p>	<p>Howard College is accredited by SACS. The most recent SACS visit was in October 2006. Administration stated the visit was very successful.</p> <p>Three organizational charts had been submitted to board staff prior to the visit. Upon request, the Administration provided an explanation about the three different organization charts and how they relate to each other. Even though the VN programs at San Angelo and Big Spring use the same curriculum, forms, and handbooks, the administrative lines of authority are separate and different in nature for each one. Regardless of this fact, the two programs do not make any curricular or program changes without getting agreement from faculty at the other site. This process makes it difficult for either program to make changes or individualize their curriculum.</p> <p>Lines of authority for nursing programs were unclear and individuals indicated there is confusion related to lines of communication and reporting.</p>	<p>Accreditation requirement met.</p> <p>Recommendation #2: Administration and nursing programs are encouraged to reconsider the organizational structure in areas related to the nursing programs and clarify the lines of authority and communications.</p>
<p>(c) The program shall have comparable status with other educational units within the institution (controlling agency).</p>	<p>Nursing faculty do not have comparable status in the area of workload when compared with faculty in other educational units.</p>	<p>See requirement under 214.7 related to faculty workload policies.</p>

STANDARD/CRITERIA	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
<p>(d) The controlling agency shall:</p> <p>(1) be responsible for satisfactory operation of the vocational nursing program;</p> <p>(2) meet rules and regulations as stated in this chapter;</p> <p>(3) provide the number of faculty necessary to meet minimum standards set by the Board and to insure a sound educational program;</p> <p>(4) provide for suitable classroom and clinical facilities;</p> <p>(5) provide secretarial assistance;</p> <p>(6) provide sufficient funds for operation and maintenance of the program to meet requirements set by the Board; and</p> <p>(7) select and appoint a qualified registered nurse director or coordinator for the program who meets the requirements of the Board. The director shall:</p> <p>(A) hold a current license or privilege to practice as a registered nurse in the state of Texas;</p> <p>(B) have been actively employed in nursing for the past five years, preferably in supervision or teaching. If the director has not been actively employed in nursing for the past five years, the director's advanced preparation in nursing, nursing education, and nursing administration and prior relevant nursing employment may be taken into consideration by the Board staff in evaluating qualifications for the position;</p> <p>(C) have a degree or equivalent experience that will demonstrate competency and advanced preparation in nursing, education, and administration; and</p> <p>(D) have had five years of varied nursing experience since graduation from a professional nursing education program.</p>	<p>The controlling agency is responsive to the needs of the nursing programs.</p> <p>The director and one faculty member provide all the instruction for the students in the VN program (presently 14 students). Their time is consumed with managing the program which leaves little time for planning, evaluating and revising the program.</p> <p>VN program at Big Spring has adequate secretarial assistance.</p>	<p>Criterion met.</p> <p>Recommendation #3: Administration and program director should explore possibilities to free more time for the program director to devote to administrative duties.</p>

STANDARD/CRITERIA	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
<p>(e) When the director or coordinator of the program changes, the director or coordinator shall submit to the Board office written notification of the change indicating the final date of employment. The controlling agency shall ensure that:</p> <p>(1) a new director or coordinator qualification form is submitted to the Board office for approval prior to being hired at an existing program or a new program;</p> <p>(2) the director may have responsibilities other than the program provided that an assistant program coordinator/lead instructor is designated to assist with the program management;</p> <p>(3) a director with responsibilities other than the program shall not have major teaching responsibilities; and</p> <p>(4) written job descriptions exist which clearly delineate responsibilities of the director, coordinator and lead instructor, as appropriate.</p>		N/A
<p>(f) In a fully approved vocational nursing education program, if the individual to be appointed as director or coordinator does not meet the requirements for director or coordinator as specified in subsection (d)(7) of this section, the administration is permitted to petition for a waiver of the Board's requirements, according to Board guidelines, prior to the appointment of said individual.</p>		N/A
<p>(g) A newly appointed director or coordinator of a vocational nursing education program shall attend the next scheduled orientation provided by the board staff.</p>	<p>Director encouraged to attend the next New Director Orientation for an update on Rule 214.</p>	

STANDARD/CRITERIA	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
<p>(h) The director or coordinator shall have the authority to direct the program in all its phases, including approval of teaching staff, selection of appropriate clinical sites, admission, progression, probation, and dismissal of students. Additional responsibilities include but are not limited to:</p> <p>(1) providing evidence of faculty expertise and knowledge to teach curriculum content;</p> <p>(2) acting as agent of the Board and issuing temporary permits to eligible graduates, upon completion of the program;</p> <p>(3) verifying student's completion of program requirements on the Affidavit of Graduation; and</p> <p>(4) completing and submitting the Annual Report to the Board office by the required date.</p>	<p>With the traditional practice of seeking agreement from the other campus before making any changes in curriculum or program operation, often faculty are blocked from making decisions. This also limits the authority of the director in making decisions about the program.</p>	<p>Recommendation #4: As administration and nursing programs should deliberate about organizational structure, they are also encouraged to decide which policies/processes will be similar in the two programs and which areas can be individualized at the separate sites.</p>
<p><b>§ 214.7 Faculty Qualifications and Faculty Organization</b></p>		
<p>(a) There shall be written personnel policies for nursing faculty that are in keeping with accepted educational standards and are consistent with the policies of the controlling agency. Faculty policies shall include, but not be limited to: qualifications, responsibilities, performance evaluation criteria, and terms of employment.</p> <p>(1) Policies concerning workload for faculty and the director or coordinator shall be in writing.</p> <p>(2) There shall be written plans for faculty orientation, development and evaluation.</p> <p>(3) There shall be orientation of new faculty members at the onset of employment.</p> <p>(4) A variety of means shall be used to evaluate faculty performance such as self, student, peer and administrative evaluation.</p>	<p>A common nursing faculty handbook is used by the VN programs at San Angelo and Big Spring, as well as by the ADN program. Job descriptions for faculty members and the director are included. Written policies for nursing faculty workload and faculty development are not included, nor are the processes for faculty orientation and evaluation included.</p> <p>There is confusion about whether policies in the faculty handbook apply to vocational nursing faculty or to associate degree nursing faculty or to both groups of faculty.</p>	<p>Requirement #1: Program director and faculty shall develop written policies for nursing faculty workload, faculty development, faculty orientation and faculty evaluation for inclusion in the faculty handbook.</p> <p>Recommendation #5: Program director and faculty are encouraged to revise the faculty handbook to clarify policies which are specific to VN faculty.</p>
<p>(b) Minimum Teaching Personnel - there shall be a minimum of one full-time nursing instructor for the program A director/coordinator without major teaching or clinical responsibilities shall not be considered a full-time instructor. Use of part-time instructors is permissible.</p>	<p>The VN curriculum at Big Spring is basically delivered by the program director and one full time faculty member. They are very dedicated to the students and to the program, and work long hours every day.</p>	<p>Criterion met.</p> <p>See Recommendation #3.</p>



STANDARD/CRITERIA	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
<p>(c) Faculty Qualifications and Responsibilities.</p> <p>(1) Documentation of faculty qualifications shall be included in the official files of the program. Each faculty member shall:</p> <p>(A) hold a current license or privilege to practice nursing in the State of Texas;</p> <p>(B) have been actively employed in nursing for the past three years. If the instructor has not been actively employed in nursing for the past three years, the instructor's advanced preparation in nursing, nursing education, and nursing administration, and prior relevant nursing employment may be taken into consideration in evaluating qualifications for the position; and</p> <p>(C) have had three years varied nursing experiences since graduation.</p>	<p>Board staff reviewed faculty files.</p>	<p>Criterion met.</p>
<p>(2) In fully approved programs, if an individual to be appointed as faculty member does not meet the requirements for faculty as specified in subsection (c) of this section, the director or coordinator is permitted to petition for a waiver of the Board's requirements, according to Board guidelines, prior to the appointment of said individual.</p>		<p>N/A</p>
<p>(3) Faculty shall be responsible for:</p> <p>(A) supervision of students in clinical learning experiences;</p> <p>(B) all initial nursing procedures in the clinical area and ascertain that the student is competent before allowing the student to perform an actual nursing procedure independently;</p> <p>(C) developing, implementing, and evaluating curriculum; and</p> <p>(D) participating in the development of standards for admission, progression, probation, dismissal of students, and participation in academic guidance and counseling.</p>		<p>Criterion met.</p>
<p>(4) Non-nursing faculty are exempt from meeting the faculty qualifications as long as the teaching assignments are not nursing didactic or clinical courses.</p>		<p>N/A</p>

STANDARD/CRITERIA	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
(5) Clinical preceptors shall be responsible for providing clinical instruction and/or supervision when a program faculty member is unavailable in clinical sites. The clinical preceptor shall meet the requirements of Rule 214.10(k)(1).	Program has used preceptors during the past year and has found it to be satisfactory. Program has prepared a preceptor agreement and other documents for preceptors.	Criterion met. Program was encouraged to continue to pursue using preceptors for students who have achieved an appropriate skill level.
(6) Substitute faculty may be employed to meet emergent program needs. Substitute faculty beyond ten consecutive working days and/or on an interim basis shall meet qualifications as specified in Rule 214.7(c)(1).		N/A
(7) Part-time faculty may participate in all aspects of the program. Clear lines of communication of program policies, objectives and evaluative criteria shall be included in policies for part-time faculty.		N/A
(8) Military faculty - Federal laws and regulations regarding licensure of military nursing personnel shall apply to Texas based military faculty members functioning within vocational nursing programs.		N/A
(d) The faculty shall meet regularly and function in such a manner that all members participate in planning, implementing and evaluating the nursing program. Such participation includes, but is not limited to the initiation and/or change in program policies, personnel policies, curriculum, utilization of affiliating agencies, and program evaluation. Minutes of faculty organization and meetings shall document the reasons for actions and the decisions of the faculty and shall be available for reference.	Currently faculty from San Angelo and Big Spring meet annually for general faculty business and for curriculum decisions. Minutes were available and provide documentation about decisions. The distance between the two campuses limits joint meetings and decisions between sites.	See comments above related to organizational structure and Recommendation #2.
<b>§214.8 Students</b>		
(a) The program shall have well defined student policies based upon statutory and Board requirements.	Students are familiar with student policies.	Criterion met.

STANDARD/CRITERIA	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
<p>(b) Individuals enrolled in approved vocational nursing education programs preparing students for licensure shall be provided verbal and written information regarding conditions that may disqualify graduates from licensure and of their rights to petition the Board for a Declaratory Order of Eligibility. Required eligibility information includes:</p> <p>(1) Texas Occupations Code §§ 301.252, 301.257, and 301.452-469; and</p> <p>(2) Sections §§213.27-213.30 of the Texas Administration Code (relating to Good Professional Character, Licensure of Persons with Criminal Convictions, Criteria and Procedure Regarding Intemperate Use and Lack of Fitness in Eligibility and Disciplinary Matters, and Declaratory Order of Eligibility for Licensure).</p>		Criterion met.
<p>(c) Admission requirements shall be stated in the student policies. Programs shall set reasonable educational requirements for admission. Applicants shall present evidence of being able to meet objectives/outcomes of the program. All students shall be pretested. Tests shall measure reading comprehension and mathematical ability.</p>		Criterion met.
<p>(d) Reasons for dismissal shall be stated in student policies.</p>		Criterion met.
<p>(e) Copies of the student policies shall be furnished to all students at the beginning of the school year. The school shall maintain a signed receipt of student policies in all students' records. It is the school's responsibility to define and enforce student policies.</p>	Student Handbook was reviewed.	Criterion met.
<p>(f) The number of students admitted to the program shall be determined by the number of qualified faculty, adequate educational facilities and resources, and the availability of appropriate clinical learning experiences for students. Programs shall not accept admissions after the third day of class.</p>		Criterion met.
<p>(g) Students shall be allocated at least 18 days leave for vacation and/or holidays. All scheduled holidays are to be observed on the holidays designated by the controlling agency. Vacation time shall be scheduled at the same time for all students.</p>		Criterion met.

STANDARD/CRITERIA	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
(h) Students shall meet the requirements of Rule 214.9(e) related to Program of Study to be eligible for graduation from an approved vocational nursing education program.		Criterion met.
(i) Acceptance of transfer students and evaluation of allowable credit for advanced placement remains at the discretion of the coordinator or director of the program and the controlling agency. Upon completing the program's requirements, the individual is considered to be a graduate of the school.		N/A
(j) Records of student conferences shall be kept and made available to the student involved and all faculty members. Students shall be provided written documentation of all conferences.		
(k) Students shall have the opportunity to evaluate faculty, courses, and learning resources and these evaluations shall be documented.		Criterion met.

STANDARD/CRITERIA	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
<p><b>§ 214.9 Program of Study</b></p>		
<p>(a) The program of study shall be:</p> <p>(1) a minimum of 1,398 clock hours; 558 hours for classroom instruction and 840 hours for clinical practice. Class hours shall include actual hours of classroom instruction in nursing and non-nursing Board-required courses/content. Clinical practice shall include actual hours of practice in clinical areas, clinical conferences, and/or simulated lab experiences;</p> <p>(2) scheduled with the placement of courses or course content throughout the entire length of the program;</p> <p>(3) organized by subject and content to meet the needs of the program;</p> <p>(4) based on the philosophy/mission and objectives/outcomes;</p> <p>(5) based on sound educational principles;</p> <p>(6) designed to prepare graduates to practice according to The Nursing Practice Act, Standards of Nursing Practice, Unprofessional Conduct Rules, and other laws and regulations which pertain to various practice settings;</p> <p>(7) designed and implemented to prepare students to demonstrate the <i>Differentiated Entry Level Competencies of Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs, Vocational (VN), Diploma/Associate Degree (Dip/ADN), Baccalaureate (BSN), September 2002</i>; and</p> <p>(8) designed to teach students to use a systematic approach to clinical decision making.</p>		<p>Criterion met.</p>

STANDARD/CRITERIA	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
<p>(b) The faculty shall be responsible for the development, implementation and evaluation of the curriculum based upon the following guidelines:</p> <p>(1) Framework. The philosophy/mission shall be the basis for curriculum development and shall reflect the purpose of the organization, faculty beliefs, and education concepts. Clinical learning objectives/outcomes derived from the philosophy/mission shall be representative of the <i>Differentiated Entry Level Competencies of Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs, Vocational (VN), Diploma/Associate Degree (Dip/ADN), Baccalaureate (BSN), September 2002</i> for preparation of a vocational nurse graduate. Clinical and course objectives/outcomes shall be stated in behavioral terms and shall serve as the mechanism for student progression. The conceptual framework shall define the internal and external influences impacting vocational nursing education and shall identify the educational method and focus.</p> <p>(2) Design and Implementation. The curriculum shall be designed and implemented to prepare students to demonstrate the <i>Differentiated Entry Level Competencies of Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs, Vocational (VN), Diploma/Associate degree (Dip/ADN), Baccalaureate (BSN), September 2002</i>. The curriculum design shall allow for flexibility to incorporate current nursing education theories and the implications of current developments in health care and health care delivery to assist graduates in meeting professional, legal, and societal expectations. Educational mobility shall also be a consideration in curriculum design.</p>		<p>Criterion met.</p>

STANDARD/CRITERIA	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
<p>(3) Specific Provisions. Instruction shall be provided in biological, physical, social, behavioral, and nursing sciences, including body structure and function, microbiology, pharmacology, and nutrition; signs of emotional health; and human growth and development. Vocational adjustments and nursing skills shall also be included. Courses may be integrated or separate. The selection and organization of the learning experiences in the curriculum shall provide continuity, sequence, and integration of learning. Didactic and skills laboratory experiences shall be concurrent. Correlated didactic and clinical practice shall be provided in the following areas, but not necessarily in separate courses:</p>		Criterion met.
<p>(A) Nursing Care of Children. Experiences shall include care of children and meeting their needs in a variety of age groups in both the acute and non-acute care setting. Day care and clinic settings may be utilized as supplementary experience. Common health deviations, physical, psychological, and neurological handicaps, and nutritional needs shall be emphasized. Students shall have opportunities to develop understanding of normal growth and development and the influences of the family, home, church, school, and community. Student practice in caring for and understanding the needs of newborn infants shall also be included.</p>		Criterion met.
<p>(B) Maternity Nursing. Opportunities shall be provided for students to gain an understanding of the psychological and physiological aspects of pregnancy, labor, and puerperium. Assisting mothers in the care of their infants shall be emphasized. A variety of settings, including clinics, organized maternity units, and maternity cases in non-segregated units, may be utilized for provision of maternity nursing experience.</p>		Criterion met.
<p>(C) Nursing Care of the Aged. Opportunities shall be included for the care of individuals experiencing specific changes related to the aging process. Students shall develop an understanding of the physical and mental changes associated with aging and the implications of aging in planning nursing care.</p>		Criterion met.

STANDARD/CRITERIA	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
<p>(D) Nursing Care of Adults. Opportunities shall be provided to the student through the use of various resources to care for adults who have health deviations. Resources used shall include learning experiences to illustrate the individual as a member of the family, the responsibilities and functions of the community in the provision of nursing care, and the types of agencies where nursing is practiced. Preventive, therapeutic, and rehabilitative aspects shall be provided. Experiences shall also include the physical, psychological, and spiritual components of health and disease. Experience shall include, but not be limited to, the acute care settings.</p>		Criterion met.
<p>(E) Nursing Care of Individuals With Mental Health Problems. Learning opportunities shall include an understanding of personality development, human needs, common mental mechanisms, and factors influencing mental health and mental illness. Common mental disorders and related therapy shall be included. Clinical experience in a unit or facility specifically designed for psychiatric care is optional.</p>		Criterion met.
<p>(c) Classroom instruction shall include organized student/faculty interactive learning activities, formal lecture, audiovisual presentations, and simulated laboratory instruction.</p>		Criterion met.
<p>(d) The curriculum plan, including course outlines, shall be kept current and available to faculty and Board representatives.</p>		Criterion met.
<p>(e) A system of grading shall be in place which does not allow grades of less than a "C" on any subject area required for licensure eligibility listed in this chapter.</p>		Criterion met.
<p>(f) Major revisions to the curriculum must be submitted to the Board office following Board guidelines for review and approval prior to implementation. Major revisions include:  (1) changes in philosophy/mission;  (2) revisions in program hours; and  (3) addition/reduction of courses in the program of study.</p>		



STANDARD/CRITERIA	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
(g) All programs implementing a curriculum change shall provide an evaluation of the outcomes of these changes and submit them with the Annual Report through the first graduating class.		
(h) There shall be provision for continuous development, implementation, and evaluation of the curriculum.		
(i) Programs may allow individuals to challenge the vocational nursing education curriculum, and shall develop and define such policies to meet theory and practice requirements for challenging credit.		N/A
(j) Adaptation to the calendar in the college catalog is permissible.	Program was advised that the use of the academic calendar is permitted.	
(k) Programs shall apprise the Board office of any program changes.		
<b>§ 214.10 Management of Clinical Learning Experiences and Resources</b>		
(a) Faculty shall be responsible for student clinical practice evaluations. Clinical practice evaluations shall be correlated with level and/or course objectives including formative and summative evaluation. Students shall receive a minimum of three clinical evaluations during the program.	Reviewed completed clinical evaluation tools for students.	Criterion met.
(b) Clinical practice shall include actual hours of practice in clinical areas, clinical conferences, and/or simulated lab experiences.		Criterion met.
(c) Clinical experiences shall include the administration of medications, health promotion and preventive aspects, nursing care of persons throughout the life span with acute and chronic illnesses, and rehabilitative care. Students shall participate in instructor supervised patient teaching. Students shall also be provided opportunities for participation in clinical conferences. The focus of clinical conferences shall be student experiences in the clinical setting. Simulated laboratory experiences may also be utilized as a teaching strategy in classroom and clinical settings to meet objectives.	Students expressed satisfaction with the clinical experiences. They stated faculty are always available and that they facilitate effective use of clinical time. The hands-on experiences are supported by theory and classroom content.	Criterion met.

STANDARD/CRITERIA	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
(d) Scheduling of student time and clinical rotations shall be made by the program faculty. Selected clinical learning experiences will remain unchanged unless a client's condition demands reassignment. Reassignment must be approved with prior consent of faculty.		
(e) The student's daily client assignment shall be made in accordance with clinical objectives/outcomes and learning needs of the students. The total number of daily assignments shall not exceed five clients.	At the beginning of the fall semester, clients are assigned by faculty. Toward the end of the semester, students select clients for their clinical experience. They prefer sicker patients for a better learning experience.	Criterion met.
(f) Consideration of selection of a clinical site shall include: (1) client census in sufficient numbers to meet the clinical objectives/outcomes of the program; and (2) evidence of collaborative arrangements in those facilities, which support multiple nursing programs.	There are limited clinical sites in the Big Spring area. One facility only has an average daily census of only 7.8.	Recommendation #6: Faculty are encouraged to consider other options for clinical experiences.
(g) There shall be a written affiliation agreement between the controlling agency and the affiliating agency before the affiliation begins. The agreement shall outline the responsibilities of each agency entering the agreement. The agreement shall contain a withdrawal of participation clause indicating a minimum period of time to be given for notice of such withdrawal.	Contracts with affiliating agencies were reviewed.	Criterion met.
(h) Affiliation agreements are optional for those clinical experiences which are observation only.		Criterion met.
(i) The affiliating agency shall: (1) provide clinical facilities for student experiences; (2) provide space for conducting clinical conferences for use by the school if classrooms are located elsewhere; (3) provide assistance with clinical supervision of students, including preceptorships, by mutual agreement between the affiliating agency and controlling agency; and (4) have no authority to dismiss faculty or students. Should the affiliating agency wish to recommend dismissal of faculty or students, such recommendation(s) shall be in writing.		Criterion met.

STANDARD/CRITERIA	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
<p>(j) The faculty member shall be responsible for the supervision of students in clinical learning experiences.</p> <p>(1) When a faculty member is the only person officially responsible for a clinical group, then the group shall total no more than ten (10) students. Patient safety shall be a priority and may mandate lower ratios, as appropriate. The faculty member shall supervise that group in only one facility at a time, unless some portion or all of the clinical group are assigned to observational experiences in additional settings.</p> <p>(2) Direct faculty supervision is not required for an observational experience. Observational experiences may be used to supplement, but not replace patient care experiences, and must serve the purpose of student attainment of clinical objectives.</p>	<p>Since program presently has 14 students, the ratio of faculty:students is 1:7.</p>	<p>Criterion met.</p>
<p>(k) Faculty may use clinical preceptors to enhance clinical learning experiences and to assist faculty in the clinical supervision of students.</p> <p>(1) Faculty shall develop written criteria for the selection of clinical preceptors.</p> <p>(2) When clinical preceptors are used, written agreements between the vocational nursing education program, clinical preceptor, and the affiliating agency, when applicable, shall delineate the functions and responsibilities of the parties involved.</p> <p>(3) Faculty shall be readily available to students and clinical preceptors during clinical learning experiences.</p> <p>(4) The designated faculty member shall meet periodically with the clinical preceptors and student(s) for the purpose of monitoring and evaluating learning experiences.</p> <p>(5) Written clinical objectives, evaluation criteria, and written description of expectations shall be shared with the clinical preceptors prior to or concurrent with the experience.</p>	<p>Director is seeking more preceptor experiences for the future.</p>	<p>Criterion met.</p>

STANDARD/CRITERIA	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
<p>(l) Clinical preceptors may be used to enhance clinical learning experiences after a student has received clinical and didactic instruction in all basic areas of nursing or within a course after a student has received clinical and didactic instruction in the basic areas of nursing for that course or specific learning experience.</p> <p>(1) In courses which use clinical preceptors for a portion of clinical learning experiences, faculty shall have no more than 12 students in a clinical group.</p> <p>(2) In a course which uses clinical preceptors as the sole method of student instruction and supervision in clinical settings, faculty shall coordinate the preceptorship for no more than 24 students.</p> <p>(3) the preceptor may supervise student clinical learning experiences without the physical presence of the faculty member in the affiliating agency or clinical practice setting.</p> <p>(4) The preceptor shall be responsible for the clinical learning experiences of no more than two students per clinical day.</p> <p>(5) The preceptor shall be accountable for evaluating the student using clinical objectives developed by vocational nursing faculty.</p> <p>(6) Clinical preceptors shall have the following qualifications:</p> <p>(A) competence in designated areas of practice;</p> <p>(B) philosophy of health care congruent with that of the nursing program; and</p> <p>(C) current licensure or privilege to practice nursing in the State of Texas.</p>		
<p>(m) The total weekly schedule throughout the length of the program shall not exceed 40 hours per week including both class and clinical practice hours. Class and clinical practice hours shall be continuous. Students shall be assigned two consecutive non-class days off each week.</p>		Criterion met.
<p>(n) Programs shall not permit utilization of students for health care facility staffing.</p>		Criterion met.

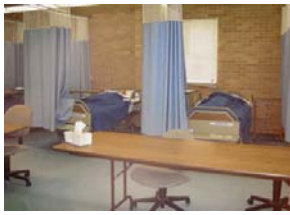
STANDARD/CRITERIA	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
<b>§ 214.11 Facilities, Resources, and Services</b>		
(a) Classrooms and nursing skills laboratory facilities shall be provided to accommodate the learning needs of the students.	Facilities are considered adequate.	Criterion met.
(b) An appropriately equipped skills laboratory shall be provided to accommodate maximum number of students allowed for the program. The laboratory shall be equipped with hot and cold running water. The laboratory shall have cabinets for storage of equipment.		Criterion met.
(c) The director or coordinator and faculty shall have office space provided, other than the classroom. There shall be privacy for counseling of students.		Criterion met.
(d) The learning resources, library, and departmental holdings shall be current, use contemporary technology appropriate for the level of the curriculum, and be sufficient for the size of the student body and the needs of the faculty. (1) Provisions shall be made for accessibility, availability, and timely delivery of information resources. (2) Facilities and policies shall promote effective use, i.e. environment, accessibility, and hours of operation.	Students reported that library access and computer technology are adequate. A shelved collection of reference books for students included volumes which are out-of-date.	Recommendation #7: Faculty are encouraged to remove out-of-date volumes from books available for student use or to label them as "historical references."
(e) Teaching aids shall be provided to meet the objectives of the program.	Classroom is provided with technology for audiovisual aids.	Criterion met.
(f) Adequate restrooms and lounges shall be provided convenient to the classroom.		Criterion met.
<b>§ 214.12 Records and Reports</b>		
(a) Student Forms - Student records shall be maintained on all students and shall be accessible to all faculty members and to Board representatives. Record forms may be developed by an individual school. Hospital employment forms are not to be used for student records.	Student files were reviewed.	Criterion met.
(b) Required Student Forms - The required student forms are the student application, evidence of student's ability to meet objectives/outcomes of the program, clinical practice evaluation, transcript, signed receipt of written student policies, evidence of student receipt of eligibility information, and statement of withdrawal.		Criterion met.

(c) Record Storage - Records shall be safely stored to prevent loss, destruction, or unauthorized use. Records of all graduates must be complete prior to permanent storage. Records on students who withdraw from the program shall be completed up to the date of withdrawal.		Criterion met.
(d) Retention of Student Records - All records shall be maintained for two years. At minimum, a transcript shall be retained as a permanent record on all students.		Criterion met.
<b>§ 214.13 Total Program Evaluation</b>		
(a) There shall be a written plan for the systematic evaluation of the total program. The plan shall include evaluative criteria, methodology, frequency of evaluation, assignment of responsibility, and indicators (benchmarks) of program and instructional effectiveness. The following broad areas shall be periodically evaluated: (1) organization and administration of the program; (2) philosophy/mission and objectives/outcomes; (3) program of study, curriculum, and instructional techniques; (4) educational facilities, resources, and services; (5) affiliating agencies and clinical learning activities; (6) students' achievement; (7) graduates' performance on the licensing examination; (8) graduates' nursing competence; (9) faculty members; performance; and (10) extension programs.	The Total Program Evaluation Plan submitted to board staff did not include methodology and indicators of program and instructional effectiveness. Evaluation information provided in the 2005 Annual Report indicated program benchmarks are in place and some evaluation based upon benchmarks has been carried out. Minutes from Advisory Committee meetings also reported progress toward benchmarks. Total Program Evaluation Plan did not include data nor evidence of program revisions based upon data.	Requirement #2: Program director and faculty shall revise the Total Program Evaluation Plan to include methodology and benchmarks and to provide the revised plan to board staff with current data. A plan to include an evaluation of methods and tools shall be included in the Total Evaluation Plan. In addition, copies of faculty meeting minutes indicating the use of evaluative data for decision-making shall be submitted to board staff.
(b) All evaluation methods and instruments shall be periodically reviewed for appropriateness.		See Requirement #2.
(c) Implementation of the plan for total program evaluation shall be documented in the minutes.		See Requirement #2.
(d) Major changes in the nursing education program shall be evidence-based and supported by rationale.		See Requirement #2.

**Meeting with Students:**

Students suggested that family members of students be included in the new student orientation. Students stated that positive aspects of the program are the faculty (always available) and the fact that faculty are very acceptant of questions. Faculty were commended on their supervision of clinicals. Two students were recognized by their peers in their role as class representatives.

STANDARD/CRITERIA	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
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**DRAFT LETTER**

Attachment #2  
Agenda Item: 3.2.4.d.

January 22, 2007

Margaret Davidson, RN, Director  
Howard College at Big Spring  
Vocational Nursing Program  
1001 Birdwell Lane  
Big Spring, Texas 79720

Dear Ms. Davidson:

At the January 18-19, 2007 meeting, members of the Board of Nurse Examiners discussed the report of the survey visit conducted by board staff on December 7, 2006. The members of the Board wish to thank [ ] for being available to answer questions.

Based on the discussion and review of the documents, it was the decision of the Board to accept the report of the December 7, 2006 survey visit of the Howard College at Big Spring Vocational Nursing Education Program and issue the following commendation, recommendations and requirements to be met.

**Commendations:**

The Director and faculty of the VN Program are commended for their dedication to the students and to the VN program.

**Recommendations:**

1. Program director and faculty are encouraged to implement an activity to review Rule 214.
2. Administration and VN nursing programs at San Angelo and Big Spring are encouraged to reconsider the organizational structure in areas related to the nursing programs and clarify the lines of authority and communications.
3. Administration and program director should explore possibilities to free more time for the program director to devote to administrative duties.
4. As administration and nursing programs should deliberate about the organizational structure, they are also encouraged to decide which policies/processes will be similar in the two VN programs and which areas can be individualized at the separate sites.
5. Program director and faculty are encouraged to revise the faculty handbook to clarify policies which are specific to VN faculty.
6. Faculty are encouraged to consider other options for clinical experiences.
7. Faculty are encouraged to remove out-of-date volumes from books available for student use or to label them as "historical references."



**Requirements:**

1. Rule 214.7(a) related to Faculty Qualifications and Faculty Organization requires in pertinent part that “There shall be written personnel policies for nursing faculty that are in keeping with accepted educational standards and are consistent with the policies of the controlling agency.... (1) Policies concerning workload for faculty and the director or coordinator shall be in writing; (2) There shall be written plans for faculty orientation, development and evaluation.” A common nursing faculty handbook is used by the VN programs at San Angelo and Big Spring, as well as by the ADN program. Written policies for nursing faculty workload and faculty development are not included, nor are there written processes for faculty orientation and evaluation in the handbook. **Therefore**, the program director and faculty shall develop written policies for nursing faculty workload, faculty development, faculty orientation and faculty evaluation for inclusion in the faculty handbook.
  
2. Rule 214.13(a-c) related to Total Program Evaluation requires in pertinent parts that “There shall be a written plan for the systematic evaluation of the total program. The plan shall include evaluative criteria, methodology, frequency of evaluation, assignment of responsibility, and indicators (benchmarks) of program and instructional effectiveness.... Implementation of the plan for total program evaluation shall be documented in the minutes.” The Total Program Evaluation Plan provided to board staff did not include methodology and indicators of program and instructional effectiveness. Evaluation information provided in the 2005 Annual Report, however, indicated that some program benchmarks are in place and are being used in evaluation. Minutes from Advisory Committee meetings also reported progress toward benchmarks. Even though it is obvious that some benchmarks have been set, they are not identified in the Total Program Evaluation Plan. The Total Program Evaluation Plan did not include data nor evidence of program revisions based upon data. In addition, faculty minutes did not indicate the use of evaluation data for decision-making and program revision. **Therefore**, the program director and faculty shall revise the Total Program Evaluation Plan to include methodology and benchmarks and to provide the revised plan to board staff with current data. A plan to include an evaluation of methods and tools shall be included on the Total Evaluation Plan. **In addition**, copies of faculty meeting minutes indicating the use of evaluative data for decision-making shall be submitted to board staff.

The program shall provide responses to the above recommendations and requirements with the 2007 Annual Report. If you have questions or if we may be of assistance, please contact board staff at (512) 305-6814.

Sincerely,

Linda R. Rounds, PhD, RN, FNP  
President

Janice I. Hooper, PhD, RN  
Nursing Consultant for Education

copy: Dr. Cheryl Sparks, President, Howard College  
Jessica Greni, MSN, RN, Nursing Programs Coordinator