

**PET FORM**  
**Planning and Evaluation Tracking**  
**(2012-2013 Assessment Period)**

Division of: Health Sciences

Person Responsible for this Division: Mark Rowh, Dean of Health Sciences

Department of: Nursing

Primary Person Responsible for this Form: Sheryl Mueller

Purpose Statement: Prepare students for professional nurse licensure and entry-level practice in response to community needs (revised: spring 2011)

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**Goal Statement #1:** Adjust instruction and services based on assessment data (AC Strategic Plan through 2015: Strategy 1.1)

**Outcome/Objective Statement #1A**

Upon program completion, ADN Program graduates will meet or exceed the national first-time pass rate for the NCLEX-RN Examination (No Excuses Goal V: Attainment of Credentials).

Employees will use institutional data/evidence to determine sustainability and viability based on trend lines for instruction, academic support services, and student services (AC Strategic Plan through 2015: Task 1.1.1).

Results (If Applicable, Provide Numbers and Percentages for Quantitative Data)

- **2010-2011 Data:** 156 graduates passed the NCLEX-RN Exam on their first attempt out of the 171 graduates who took the exam from October 1, 2010 to September 30, 2011. The official first-time pass rate for 2011 was 91.23% (Texas BON statistics).
- **2011-2012 Data:** 176 graduates are known to have passed the NCLEX-RN Exam on their first attempt out of 209 graduates who took the exam from October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2012. The first-time pass rate for 2012 is expected to be 84.21%. (Official Texas BON statistics will not be available until November 2012).

• Analysis

- Provide Previous Data/Result Analysis

The 2011 first-time pass rate for ADN program graduates was 91.23%. The national first-time pass rate mean in 2011 was 87.81%. The outcome for 2011 was met. The 2012 national first-time pass rate mean for the NCLEX-RN Exam has not been released by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN). Since the national mean is usually in the range of 87-88%, the program outcome for 2012 is not likely to be met.

• Improvements

- List any Improvements Made in the **2011-2012** Year:

The program outcome for NCLEX-RN first-time pass rates was met in 2010-2011. However, the NCLEX-RN first-time pass rate for program graduates is expected to be below the national mean for 2011-2012. The

strategies utilized to maintain/promote student success on the national licensing exam are all being re-examined. Some strategies that were utilized in 2011-12 were:

- Use of the Evolve specialty and customized exams throughout the program
- Administration of HESI Exit Exams and required remediation in Level IV of the program
- Use of NCLEX-RN Teams to assist Level IV students to prepare to take the NCLEX-RN Exam after graduation
- Review of the biannual and annual NCLEX-RN Program reports in Curriculum and Faculty Organization meetings to identify program curriculum strengths and areas for improvement
- Review of program exams in Testing Committee to promote faculty construction of challenging, statistically-sound test items
- Incorporation of content and/or concepts in the curriculum, which are included in the 2010 NCLEX-RN Detailed Test Plan
- Employment of a Retention Specialist to identify and intervene with at-risk students through the promotion of effective study habits, good time management skills, and specific test-taking skills
- Use of Supplemental Instruction (SI) to promote student success in courses with historically-high attrition rates

○ **Evaluate Why Improvements Were Successful/Were Not Successful:**

Despite a comprehensive approach to student success as noted above, the NCLEX-RN first-time pass rate for program graduates declined in 2011-2012. There are several reasons why some of the strategies utilized to maintain/promote student success may not have been successful. First of all, the remediation program for Level IV students after the HESI Exit Exam was not well-defined and well-executed. Secondly, some NCLEX-RN Team Leaders were uncertain of their role and responsibilities in the remediation and mentoring process of Level IV students. Also some of the faculty teaching didactic courses are neophyte test-item writers. NCLEX-style test items are challenging to write and require a level of sophistication in test item-writing that is achieved with time and experience. Employment of a Retention Specialist was a positive experience for a selected group of at-risk students, but reaching the vast numbers of students who might have benefitted from the promotion of effective study habits, good time management skills, and specific test-taking skills proved to be impossible.

○ **What Budget Implications Were Involved with this Improvement?**

The cost to implement the strategies utilized to maintain/promote student success in 2011-2012 was largely included in the ADN budget or in the established student fee structure. Professional Nurse Shortage Reduction Program (NSRP) funds from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) paid the salary of the Retention Specialist and one SI Leader.

• **Recommendations/Actions for 2012-2013**

- **Person Responsible:** The ADN Program Faculty Organization and Nursing Department Chair
- **Action Plan:**
  - Continue the above strategies with the exception of employment of a program Retention Specialist. (The Retention Specialist terminated her employment in July 2012.)
  - Re-define the responsibilities of the NCLEX-RN Team Leaders and re-enforce their role in monitoring remediation of students after the first and second HESI Exit Exams.
  - Implement a comprehensive remediation program for Level IV students that permits the specific assignment of content-based practice testing matched to the results of the two HESI Exit Exams (NCLEX-RN 10,000 powered by Prep-U).
  - Provide faculty development in evidence-based testing practices and item-writing.

- Charge the Testing Committee with a more active role in reviewing and improving test items from tests in all didactic program courses.
  - Appoint faculty task force groups from the Curriculum Committee to research and make recommendations for strengthening content in areas revealed as needing improvement by the bi-annual NCLEX-RN Program Reports.
  - Assign the Team Coordinators and Program Director to conduct a review of factors that may have contributed to the decline in NCLEX-RN pass rates utilizing the Texas BON self-study guidelines for RN programs.
  - **Expected Time Frame Needed to Implement Action Plan:** Results of the new action plan will be available in September of 2013
  - **What Budget Implications Are Involved with this Action?** The Prep-U remediation program for Level IV students, the test item writing faculty development activities, and the salary of one SI Leader are being funded by the NSRP. There are no implications for the ADN Program budget associated with this action plan.
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**Goal Statement #2:** Facilitate student progression in the ADN Program (No Excuses Goal IV: Persistence from term-to-term and year-to-year).

**Outcome/Objective Statement #2A**

70% of students admitted to the Traditional Generic ADN Program will graduate within 36 months as determined by completion rates calculated from ADN Program files and AC data base records.

70% of students admitted to the Fast Forward Generic Option will graduate within 18 months as determined by completion rates calculated from ADN Program files and AC data base records.

70% of students admitted to the Fast Forward Transition Option will graduate within 12 months as determined by completion rates calculated from ADN Program files and AC data base records.

- Results (If Applicable, Provide Numbers and Percentages for Quantitative Data)
  - **2010-2011 Data:** 96 students out of 156 students (61.5%) graduated from the Traditional Generic ADN Program in 2010-2011. 23 students out of 51 students (45%) graduated from the LVN to RN Advanced Placement Option (Transition option) within 18 months in 2010-2011.
  - **2011-2012 Data:** 137 students out of 242 students (56.6%) graduated within 36 months from the Traditional Generic ADN Program in 2011-2012. The outcome was not met for these Traditional Generic students. 10 of the 14 students (71.4%) admitted to the Fast Forward Generic Option graduated within 18 months in 2011-2012. The outcome was met for the Fast Forward Generic Option students. 17 students out of 22 students (77.2%) admitted to the Fast Forward Transition Option graduated within 12 months in 2011-2012. The outcome was met for the Fast Forward Transition Option students.
- Analysis
  - **Provide Previous Data/Result Analysis**

Timeframes for the various program options were changed in spring 2011 from semesters to months in order to facilitate comparability among these options. Also, the completion percentage benchmarks were changed from 85% to 70% in fall 2011 to be consistent with Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board benchmarks for the professional nursing programs in the state who participate in the Nurse Shortage Reduction Program (NSRP). This was also a recommendation from the National League for Nursing Accreditation Commission team that surveyed the program in October 2011.

The overall program graduation rate improved from 2011 to 2012 very slightly. The overall program graduation rate for 2011 was 57.5% (119/207), and the overall program graduation rate for 2012 was 59.0% (164/278). However, the graduation rate for the majority of program students (Traditional Generic ADN) actually declined from 61.5% in 2010-2011 to 56.6% in 2011-2012.

The Fast Forward Generic Option and Fast Forward Transition Option were introduced respectively in 2010 and 2011. There are not comparison graduation rates for the Fast Forward Generic Option yet. However, in comparing the graduation rates for the LVN to RN Advanced Placement Option (Transition) in 2010-2011 (45%) to the Fast Forward Transition Option graduation rate in 2011-2012 (77.2%), the Fast Forward Transition Option has a significantly higher graduation rate.

- Improvements

- List any Improvements Made in the **2011-2012** Academic Year:

Strategies used in the 2011-2012 academic year to promote program completion rates included, but were not limited to:

- Implementation of a “Nursing Success Boot Camp” for newly admitted generic students
- Use of “Care Groups” in the first-semester skills course to promote student-faculty connections
- Use of supplemental instruction in two lower-level program courses with high student attrition
- Employment of a Retention Specialist with THECB funds from the NSRP award
- Incorporation of a program-wide testing and remediation program (Evolve Reach)
- Introduction of a new clinical instruction and evaluation model
- Use of clinical simulation to promote theoretical application of content in a safe, simulated setting
- Addition of flexibility in clinical scheduling
- Use of participatory, active learning strategies in didactic courses
- Incorporation of online teaching resources and instructional technology in all didactic courses
- Use of one-to-one or small group tutoring by faculty members
- Provision of corporate, small group, or individual test reviews for each didactic course
- Referral to student support services, e.g. financial aid, advising, library, etc.

- Evaluate Why Improvements Were Successful/Were Not Successful:

Despite the use of various student success strategies, student attrition remains a challenge. This is especially true for the Traditional Generic ADN students. There are undoubtedly some unknown variables that are contributing to the high attrition rate of these cohorts of students.

On the other hand, the higher graduation rates of the two Fast Forward Option student cohorts is may be due, at least in part, to the academic or nursing backgrounds of students in these cohorts. The Fast Forward Generic Option students are required to have achieved a higher GPA in the required general education courses in the program of study and higher scores on the admission assessment exam. The Fast Forward Transition Option students are licensed vocational nurses (LVNs) with a nursing background. Also, adjustment of the timeframe for completion of the transition program may have positively contributed to a higher graduation rate than previously experienced by the LVN to RN Advanced Placement Option students cohorts.

- What Budget Implications Were Involved with this Improvement?

The cost to implement the strategies utilized to promote student success in 2011-2012 was primarily included in the ADN budget or in the established fee structure for students. NSRP funds from the THECB paid the salary of the program Retention Specialist.

- Recommendations/Actions for 2012-2013
    - Person Responsible: ADN Program Faculty Organization and Nursing Department Chair
    - Action Plan:
      - Continue the strategies listed in the previous action plan with the exception of employment of a Retention Specialist
      - Identify specific strategies to implement in generic didactic courses with the highest attrition rates
      - Continue to explore specific factors that contribute to overall attrition in the Traditional Generic student cohorts
      - Consider revising the academic requirements for program admission to the Traditional Generic Option
      - Consider revising the program progression criteria for the two generic options
      - Implement specific program re-admission, re-enrollment, and transfer policies for all options
      - Complete the student database that the previous Retention Specialist initiated to track and analyze characteristics and progression of successful versus unsuccessful students enrolled in the program options
      - Consider placing a time limit on the age of general education course work at program admission
      - Consider increasing the passing grade for all nursing courses from 70% to 75%
    - Expected Time Frame Needed to Implement Action Plan:  
Most of the strategies listed in the new action plan could not be implemented prior to fall 2013.
    - What Budget Implications Are Involved with this Action?  
There are no budget implications involved in the strategies added to the action plan for 2012-2013.
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**Goal Statement #3:** Prepare graduates to secure job placement as registered nurses in the workforce.

**Outcome/Objective Statement #3A**

85% of each graduating cohort who passes the NCLEX-RN Exam and seeks employment will be employed as registered nurses within one year of graduation as determined by ADN Program Alumni Surveys.

• Results (If Applicable, Provide Numbers and Percentages for Quantitative Data)

- **2010-2011 Data:** A total of 33 surveys were submitted by one- and five-year alumni who graduated from the ADN Program. A total of 31 respondents indicated that they were employed in nursing full-time or part-time. This translates into a 93.3% employment rate.
- **2011-2012 Data:** A total of 67 surveys were submitted by one- and five-year alumni who graduated from the ADN Program. A total of 62 respondents indicated that they were employed in nursing full-time or part-time. This translates into a 92.5% employment rate.

• Analysis

- Provide Previous Data/Result Analysis

The outcome for job placement was met in 2011-2012. Five-year alumni will no longer be included in the survey, which includes job placement. The NLNAC site visitors in October 2011 recommended that surveys of alumni be confined to one-year post-graduation. The Research and Program Effectiveness Committee adopted that change, and only one-year alumni were surveyed in spring 2012.

One-year alumni, seeking employment, are securing employment as registered nurses at rates similar to the previous year. Anecdotal reports from alumni do indicate that securing their “ideal” position or shift may not be possible during the first year after graduation. Other reports indicate that preferential hiring is being given to registered nurses with experience or to new graduates who are prepared at the baccalaureate level.

• Improvements

- List any Improvements Made in the **2011-2012** Academic Year:  
No improvements were indicated. Program graduates continue to secure job placement as registered nurses in the workforce at rates above the expected outcome.
- Evaluate Why Improvements Were Successful/Were Not Successful:  
Graduate job placement rates continue to be closely monitored and community feedback is regularly solicited to ascertain the need to increase or decrease program admission/enrollment. The program Advisory Committee meets on a biannual basis and consideration is given to present and future job placement of graduates. The Nursing Department Chair communicates regularly with employers of program graduates in the area to discuss employment trends.
- What Budget Implications Were Involved with this Improvement?  
Not applicable.

• Recommendations/Actions for **2012-2013**

- Person Responsible: Nursing Department Chair and Advisory Committee
  - Action Plan: Continue to actively trend the market demand for registered nurses locally and at the state and national levels.
  - Expected Time Frame Needed to Implement Action Plan: Data will be collected from one-year alumni again in spring 2012
  - What Budget Implications Are Involved with this Action? None
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