

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
Advisory Committee on RN Nursing Education (ACORN)

Minutes of Meeting Held March 7, 2008
10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
1200 East Anderson Lane
Austin, TX 78752
Lone Star Room

Members Present

Peggy Aalund
Patricia Allen
Barbara Cordell
Eileen Deges Curl
Regina Jones Johnson
Josefina Lujan
Ana Mejia-Dietche
Edward Russell
Debora Simmons
LeAnn Wagner
Dorothy Joy (for Mary Beth Thomas)

Members Absent

Mary Beth Thomas
Beth Mancini
Joyce Batcheller

Coordinating Board Staff Present

Chris Fowler
Donna Carlin

Guests Present

Brenda Cleary
Carole Kenner*
Lu Pelayo
Janice Hooper
Claire Jordan*

*Present for portions of the agenda

<p>I. Introduction and Brief Overview of Committee Charge</p>	<p>Ms. LeAnn Wagner, Presiding Chairwoman of the committee started the meeting at 10:05 am. Ms. Wagner provided an overview of the goals and focus of the meeting, which is to advise and collaborate with Dr. Brenda Cleary, who has been hired by the Coordinating Board as the RN Curriculum Consultant for SB 139. She emphasized that the committee is in an advisory capacity and that Dr. Cleary will be doing the work associated with the awarded contract for the RN curriculum consultant.</p> <p>Ms. Wagner announced that there is a lot of interest in the committee and that future meetings will be held in the board room which will allow additional space with a larger room to accommodate additional observers that have an interest in the work being done.</p> <p>All committee members introduced themselves and gave background information about the types of nursing experience they've had and what institution or organization they represent.</p> <p>The RN curriculum consultant, Dr. Brenda Cleary gave an overview of her background. Dr. Cleary stated that she has been the director of the first nursing workforce center located in Raleigh, North Carolina for the past 14 years. She recently accepted a new position with the newly created Center to Champion Nursing in America, which is housed at AARP and funded through the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The new center will get a unique focus of both the consumer and advocates behind nursing. Previously she was the Regional Dean at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center in Odessa. Dr. Cleary has worked with Dr. Pat Benner and is on the national advisory committee for the Oregon Nursing Consortium on Education. Dr. Cleary stressed the importance of having representatives from practice on the advisory committee. She is currently an evaluator for hospitals seeking Magnet status which makes her aware of what nurses do every day and how important it is for education and practice to work together to prepare nurses for their roles.</p> <p>Dr. Cleary will be working with Dr. Carole Kenner, who has been the Dean at the University of Oklahoma School of Nursing for the past four years. She has been in nursing education for the past 24 years. Her background is in neonatal intensive care nursing. She is involved with a committee of the American Academy of Nursing which is looking at the educational preparation of nurses in the workforce.</p> <p>Ms. Wagner stated that although she is chairing the committee for the first meeting, a chairperson will not be formally elected until the second meeting when all of the members are present. She stated that the goal for today's meeting was to provide Dr. Cleary and Dr. Kenner with a clear overview of the current state of nursing in Texas and discuss what has worked and what hasn't worked with regard to nursing education.</p> <p>An announcement was made that people would be dialing in to listen to the meeting over the phone.</p>
<p>II. Overview of Senate Bill 139 and RFP for Nursing Consultant to Conduct Study on</p>	<p>Chris Fowler read the requirements of SB 139 which is that the Coordinating Board, in consultation with the Board of Nurse Examiners, shall conduct a study to identify methods to improve the curricula of professional and vocational nursing programs. The study must focus</p>

<p>Nursing Curriculum</p>	<p>on methods to improve instruction on providing safe and high-quality nursing care to patients. Ms. Fowler stressed that the focus of the meeting was on RN nursing programs. The bill further requires that no later than December 31, 2008, the board shall complete the study and submit to each institution of higher education or other entity that offers a professional or vocational nursing program in this state, the governor, and the legislature a report that includes specific, detailed recommendations concerning methods to improve the curricula of professional and vocational nursing programs, including instruction relating to patient care.</p> <p>Ms. Fowler stated that due to the CB's internal timeline, a draft report for the Board's review must be completed by August to be considered at the October board meeting. Because of the aggressive timeline, an external consultant was selected based on a competitive bid process. The process includes input from the advisory committee and other nursing programs in the state.</p> <p>Ms. Fowler went over the Consultant RFP requirements, which include the development of one or more curriculum models for RN programs and would have a minimum of 15 characteristics and/or content requirements. Other than the 15 requirements, however, the process would allow Dr. Cleary to have a blank slate and an open window for innovation without barriers on how she might construct the model and curriculum framework. The model(s) will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meet or exceed standards of national nursing accreditation bodies or clearly identify conflicts with those standards. 2. Be completed by students in no more than four semesters, each semester normally representing 16 weeks of instruction, or clearly describe rationale for longer or shorter programs; 3. Emphasize the latest patient safety competencies; 4. Use competency-based testing; 5. Facilitate articulation between RN programs and mobility among different levels of nursing including LVN, ADN, and BSN education; 6. Promote student success and completion rates; 7. Promote evidence-based practice; 8. Maximize the use of existing and potential nursing faculty at RN programs and at their clinical affiliates; 9. Propose a faculty to student ratio for clinical courses that is consistent with projected enrollment increases, likely faculty shortages, and availability of new learning technologies; 10. Integrate didactic and clinical content with new instructional technology; 11. Address any characteristics unique to Texas and nursing instruction in Texas; 12. Propose standardized pre-requisite courses at each level of ADN and BSN instruction; 13. Propose any needed modification in the differentiations between ADN and BSN instruction; 14. Promote easy transition from student nurse to practice nurse to minimize training needed after graduation; and 15. Provide a cost per graduate that is as low as possible. <p>Ms. Fowler went over the project structure and timeline: Phase 1: Data Collection, review of current curricula within the United</p>
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	<p>States, general curriculum framework development and legislative report writing (due in August for the Board's review and consideration in October, 2008);</p> <p>Phase 2: Curriculum development and peer review, and</p> <p>Phase 3: final report writing, ending March 1, 2009 (which will include implementation recommendations).</p> <p>Ms. Fowler stated that Dr. Cleary is expected to travel to Austin at least five times for the project, and future ACORN meetings may be scheduled around the consultant trips and collaboration with the LVN consultant.</p> <p>Donna Carlin stated that the 15 points for the model (listed above) are the same for the LVN consultant with substitution of the term LVN for RN. She stated that the CB is close to finalizing the contract for the LVN consultant. It is anticipated that the first meeting of the LVN Advisory Committee will be held on March 28. The goal for the future will be for both the RN and LVN advisory committees to meet on the same day and break off into separate rooms as necessary. An announcement will be made once the contract is finalized.</p>
<p>III. Overview of Consultants Plan for Conducting the Study</p>	<p>Dr. Cleary expressed appreciation to the CB staff for laying out the expected process in the RFP. She stated that nurses remain at the top in regard to the public's trust because we're responsive people who want to make a difference with high ethics. She stated that we're at a time when everyone will be challenged to do things a little differently, especially given the faculty shortage and the difficulty recruiting people into faculty roles. She stated that we all have sacred cows and that we need to look at them and what can be changed.</p> <p>Dr. Cleary mentioned Stephen Mitchell's book entitled "Parables and Portraits" which describes Sisyphus, a tragic hero who is condemned to carry a rock up a mountain over and over again and realizes he is in love with the rock. He cherishes every roughness and every ounce of it. He talks to it, sings to it, dreams of it, and life is unimaginable without it. He doesn't realize that at any moment he is permitted to step aside and hurl the rock to the bottom of the mountain and go home. Dr. Cleary likens the parable to nursing's journey. She wants Texas to be seen as a leader in nursing innovation. Around the country there are discussions about what nursing education will look like in the future with the adaptation and harnessing of more technology.</p> <p>Dr. Cleary described the following plans: Phase One deliverable: cogent report to legislature with outline of a curricular framework. To accomplish that there needs to be involvement. She wants to have Texas stakeholders involved in every step of the process.</p> <p>Dr. Cleary outlined some of the activity going on in health care and nursing around the country that will influence her work and can be drawn upon, including: the Institute of Medicine's (IOM) framework, informatics, patient-centered care for LVNs, quality and safety education in nursing, creative nursing projects funded through the CB, the pedagogical pieces from Pat Benner, and models for nursing</p>

education from states such as Massachusetts, Oregon, Oklahoma, California, New Jersey (just starting). Dr. Cleary expects to use data collection techniques to dissect each model at a deep level, looking at the strengths and weaknesses of each model, identifying the opportunities and threats of using each model, and ultimately taking the best from each model.

Dr. Kenner stated that at the national level every state has had to look at these issues. She stressed the need for conversations that are not construed as outrageous or prescriptive and that elicit input from stakeholders. She encouraged a ground rule for the group to bring out issues and discuss what will work and what won't work in Texas, and what educators need to look at as far as overall patient safety. .

Phase Two: build on framework, delve deeply and be really creative.

Final Phase: formal report beyond legislative report.

Le Ann Wagner commented about the diversity of nursing practice and education in Texas, ranging from small rural hospitals and small nursing education programs to large medical facilities and nursing programs in metropolitan areas.

Jan Hooper stated that this is a unique opportunity to bridge the gap between education and practice.

Josefina Lujan asked whether the goal of the consultant's work would be the development of a common curriculum. Ms. Wagner responded that the goal was to provide information to the consultants about what has been tried in Texas nursing education programs and what has worked and what hasn't worked, and to discuss driving factors.

Dr. Lujan stated that it would be helpful to have some commonalities in order to promote transferability. Dr. Cleary stated that nationally there was beginning to be discussion about whether every school could continue to write their own curricula, that articulation wasn't working very well, the looming faculty shortage, and the need for use of evidenced-based practice. She hopes that Texas will embrace an evidenced-based common core nursing curriculum, similar to what is happening in North Carolina.

Ms. Wagner stressed the need to stay focused on students and what is best for them and to also focus on patients. She stressed the need for faculty to act as mentors for students. Deborah Simmons stated that she's been concerned because she's had some of her best and brightest students leave nursing after a period of practicing after graduation due to frustration with the work environment. She believes that nurses are getting more tasks to do in a work environment that hasn't caught up with safety science and that we are just now beginning to understand the cognitive load of nursing. She stated that often nurses have no situation awareness of the unsafe practices they're dealing with and lack the skills to bring it up the chain of command to make people aware of the situations. These problems make nurses doubt their abilities to deliver safe care. She stated that it only takes a few incidences of letting their patients down before they lose faith in their abilities. Nurses have lost their ability to make a connection with

	<p>patients. Undergraduates need to be made aware of the work environment they're going into and give them the ability to deal with quality processes. Nurses must learn how to be change agents. Another factor is that consumer groups are more aware and demanding.</p> <p>Dr. Curl mentioned a program in the Beaumont area where one of the hospitals is allowing LVNs to go back to school and are paid full-time, work 20 hours per week, and pay all of their tuition and they are having difficulty getting LVNs to fill out the application to go to school.</p> <p>Dr. Cleary stressed the need to study the Oregon model because it is proactive and provides seamless movement through the levels of nursing education, and students are dually admitted to associate and baccalaureate degree programs.</p> <p>Dr. Lujan stated that UTEP has an RN to BSN, RN to MSN, and the Dean is now working on an LVN to BSN, LVN to MSN and LVN to PhD program with didactic content on-line. She stated that 2 percent of all nurses in the nation are Hispanic, while 14 percent of the population is Hispanic. The National Association of Hispanic nurses has been looking at why LVNs do not return to school to further their education. She stated that there is a need for mentors for Hispanic nurses to act as role models and provide ethnic and cultural concordance. At El Paso Community College 90 percent of nursing students are Hispanic and only 10 percent of faculty are Hispanic.</p> <p>Ms. Wagner suggested that dual credit programs at high schools in Texas should be looked at as an avenue for students to gain college credit while in high school.</p>
<p>Overview of Key Texas Reports and Grant Activities Related to Potential Characteristics of New Curriculum Framework and Model</p>	<p>Ms. Wagner gave an overview of the key findings from the Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies report on "Data and Information on Safe Patient Care, Nurse Supply and Demand Trends, and Impact on the Nursing and Faculty Shortage." She emphasized the need for safe patient care given the fast-paced work environment. She highlighted findings from the "Supply of and Demand for Registered Nurses and New Graduates in Texas" report.</p> <p>Dorothy Joy provided a binder for each ACORN member from the Board of Nursing that includes the charge and membership of their Advisory Committee on Education, rules 227.1-227.5 relating to Pilot Programs for Innovative Applications to Professional Nursing Education, the Nursing Practice Act, Chapter 215 relating to Professional Nurse Education, the Differentiated Entry Level Competencies of Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs (September 2002) which will be revised in 2008, the survey instrument and results of a survey done by the Board of Nursing regarding nursing partnerships. Ms. Joy announced that the BON will be participating in the National Council of State Board's of Nursing study entitled "Taxonomy of Error, Root Cause Analysis and Practice," to determine the root cause behind nursing errors. Ms. Joy also provided a report on the BON's "Statewide plan to create innovative model for nursing education to increase RN Graduates in Texas Professional Nursing Education Programs" and emphasized that no funding was allocated from the legislature to implement the plan.</p>

	<p>Chris Fowler reported on the Coordinating Board's 2006 report to the Legislature entitled "Strategies to Increase the Number of Graduates from Initial RN Licensure Programs," and the results of a 2008 survey of a sample of students (n=165) attending the Texas Nursing Student Association meeting in Austin, and gave an overview of the history of Nursing Innovation Grant Program. Approximately \$4.05 million dollars from tobacco settlement funds have been awarded each biennium to Texas nursing programs in a competitive grant program since 2001. The emphasis of the program has shifted since 2002 in that in the early years small amounts were awarded to programs to fix internal problems. The focus of the 2008-2009 awards is on increasing capacity and improving retention for nursing programs through hospital-based partnerships.</p>
<p>Discussion of Key Factors Influencing a New Curriculum Framework and Model</p>	<p>Dr. Cleary mentioned attending a conference about mindfulness recently where the "four-fold way" was presented which she believes is relevant to the current project. The four-fold was is: show up, pay attention, tell the truth without judgment or blame, and be open to the outcomes. Dr. Cleary asked committee members to report on "roads they have gone down" over the past five years and describe what has worked regarding nursing education and how they know it worked and what has not worked.</p> <p>Peggy Aalund described the WINNER project grant which maximized the use of preceptors by nursing programs in the Houston/Galveston area. At her college, the NCLEX-RN pass rate for precepted students was higher than for traditional students, and their satisfaction and readiness to practice was greater. She stated that two preceptors returned to school to get their master's degrees and are now faculty at her school. She described the downside of the project as preceptor burnout. Pat Allen described a project done by TTUHSC with similar outcomes where the school used clinical coaches. Eileen Deges Curl described a project whereby Lamar University and two community colleges used simulation and tested it to see if it could be substituted for one-half of the required clinical time for 4 clinical areas including OB, mental health, pediatrics and critical care. Students in the simulation group had better outcomes than students in the traditional clinical groups. Nursing faculty developed the simulation modules. In order to determine which situations would be developed, a focus group with expert clinical nurses was used from nurses at local hospitals. The schools are now sharing faculty in areas such as mental health and critical care.</p> <p>Ana Mejia-Dietche identified the project done by 12 nursing programs in the Dallas/Ft. Worth Council which consists of programs in both rural and metropolitan area that are both ADN and BSN programs. The project resulted in the development of modules for the top ten high risk, high volume nursing diagnosis.</p> <p>Ms. Wagner identified the project done by Midwestern State University (MSU) with the use of clinical simulation. The project was a partnership between the university, a community college and a hospital. It resulted in the development of a clinical competency transcript showing what clinical skills they had accomplished. MSU was able to increase their enrollment by using bachelor's prepared faculty in the simulation laboratory.</p>

Dr. Lujan described a HRSA-funded project at the University of Texas El Paso (UTEP) whereby a non-nurse male retention specialist was used to advise students. It resulted in an increase in retention rates, retention of male students and an increase in the NCLEX-RN pass rate.

Dr. Curl identified the BON's Differentiated Competencies as a strength with clear delineation of the levels of nursing practice. Ms. Joy stated that the combining of the RN and LVN board has been very positive for the state. Dr. Ed Russell described the support provided to employees by the rural hospital in Uvalde, including payment for differentiated practice, a structured preceptor program with pay differential for preceptors, scholarships, career ladders and tuition reimbursement. Ms. Aaland stated that the Greater Houston Partnership Program has been very effective in establishing collaboration between nursing programs and health care facilities. Faculty salaries were enhanced (\$1000/month) as a result of a study from the group. Ms. Simmons stated that as a result of the partnership and as an employee of MD Anderson, she is "loaned out" one day per week as a clinical instructor for TWU-Houston.

Dr. Johnson stated that the Alternate Entry program at UT Austin has been very effective in increasing the number of master's prepared nurses.

Dr. Cordell stated that the Panola College has had a successful online program with all of the clinical done on weekends and nights. Graduates of the first cohort had 100 percent pass rate on the licensure exam.

Ms. Mejia-Dietche stated that Austin Community College has had a lot of success with its online LVN to RN transition program.

Dr. Cordell stated that the Field of Study Curriculum for Nursing (FOSC), which was intended to enhance articulation and transfer for nursing students seeking a baccalaureate degree, has been beneficial. Dr. Cleary requested a copy of the FOSC.

Dr. Curl stated that she had recently viewed an NLN webinar which focused on standardized curriculum. She stated that research was presented that showed that blocked curriculum was more effective than integrated curriculum. She stated that Lamar University had done a study on mental health and pediatric nursing curriculum and they found that when they switched to a blocked curriculum the student scores had gone up. She believes it is important to look at the research on blocked versus integrated curriculum.

Ms. Aalund stated that Lone Star College-Kingwood would be developing a self paced transition program for second degree students with a Coordinating Board grant.

Ms. Wagner stated that the online LVN transition program for Victoria College at Gonzales has been successful.

Dr. Cleary asked about paths that have been gone down that have been unsuccessful. Ms. Mejia-Dietche stated that the presence of preceptors in clinical has created the need for very careful clinical

	<p>scheduling in the region.</p> <p>Dr. Russell described his experience in having students from two different on-line nursing programs having clinical experiences at the rural hospital where he is the Chief Nursing Officer. Students from one program were much more prepared to deliver patient care and use critical thinking skills compared to the students from another program.</p> <p>Ms. Joy stated that there should be an evaluation of the various testing company products.</p> <p>Dr. Cleary said that she hoped that Texas will participate in the National Summit to Increase Education Capacity that will be sponsored by the Department of Labor and Center to Champion Nursing. There will be a call for proposals to come from teams in each state. The announcement will go to the workforce development boards and nursing workforce centers.</p>
Public Comment	<p>Lu Pelayo from San Antonio College described a recent bond issue that was passed in San Antonio to build a virtual lab that will be used by nursing students St. Philip's College and San Antonio College. Baccalaureate prepared faculty in the lab will be paired with master's prepared nursing faculty to increase clinical capacity.</p> <p>One observer stated that TWU's online MSN nurse educator track has been successful in helping the nursing faculty shortage.</p> <p>Bonnie Higgins asked whether handouts could be provided online for the next meeting. Ms. Wagner stated that the meetings would be made available in the future.</p>
Future Meeting Dates for ACORN	<p>The next ACORN meeting is scheduled for May 12, 2008 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Another meeting will be scheduled in August and possibly in mid-July. Ms. Fowler was asked to send out some potential dates.</p>
Agenda Items for May 12, 2008 meeting	<p>Election of Chairperson, the full charge and procedural rules will be adopted. Alignment of the committee's activities with the state's higher education plan for Closing the Gaps was suggested by Ms. Fowler. She also suggested discussion of the division of labor with the development of subcommittees who could work with the 4 elements of Closing the Gaps and draw on the resources of the state and other nursing programs and the identification of bigger issues prior to the legislative session. Dr. Curl suggested discussion of predictive admission criteria.</p>
Adjournment	<p>The meeting was adjourned by LeAnn Wagner at 2:45 pm.</p>