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MRS. MARGARET L. ROWLAND, R.N.
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

October 11, 1978

Dr. Hector P. Garcia
American GI Forum
of the United States
1315 Bright
Corpus Christi, Texas 78405

Dear Dr. Garcia:

This is in response to your mailgram of September 29, 1978, regarding the Del Mar College Associate Degree Nursing Program. From your mailgram it appears that the action of the Board as specified in our letter of September 8, 1978, may have been misunderstood. To provide you with additional information the following facts are submitted.

Our professional staff has reviewed the files in the office of the Board in order to provide background information relating to this matter. First, I would like to point out that the approval conveyed in the letter of March 31, 1975 was in response to a request for advanced placement. It appears that during a routine survey visit to the school on March 26 and 27, 1975 the subject of advanced placement for Licensed Vocational Nurse's (LVN's) was discussed with our consultant, Miss Sally Marcinek. The consultant's report includes the following statement: "In the fall semester, 1975, the nursing school plans to admit LVN's who meet a certain criteria, into the sophomore year. If they complete requirements for this last year, they will graduate in one year and be eligible to take the State Board Test Pool Examination." We have no record of a formal proposal from the school. Apparently the plans were outlined to the consultant verbally and through intra-college memoranda. The staff reviewed a memorandum from Mrs. Willis to Glen Kost, Assistant Dean, dated February 7, 1975, a memorandum from Ted Boaz, Dean, to Glen Kost, dated February 24, 1975 and a letter to prospective students, dated November 21, 1974, along with the consultant's verbal interaction with college officials. Since it was the staff's understanding that the school was planning to implement a method of advanced placement which did not necessitate a curriculum change, it was not necessary to refer the request to the Board. Had there been any indication that a separate program was involved, the school would have been informed at that time to submit a formal proposal for the Board's consideration. The Board does encourage schools to offer advanced placement; and most of the programs do provide this method of admission for qualified students.

The annual reports from the school to the Board of Nurse Examiners for 1975 and 1976 gave no indication that students were admitted into a career mobility program. Information contained in the reports indicated that a specified number of students were admitted by advanced placement. It should also be noted that we did not visit the school during this period of time.

During a survey visit to the school in April, 1978, the Board's consultant, Miss Aileen Kishi, noted in the school's annual report to the Board that students were admitted both by advanced placement and "Career Mobility". Also, for the first time, the report contained information regarding policies for the admission of students into the career mobility program. The consultant requested clarification of the difference between advanced placement and career mobility. Since the visiting consultant had the impression this might be two programs, the school was asked to submit materials describing the career mobility program for the Board's review and consideration. These materials were reviewed by the Board at their May, 1978 meeting. Based upon the consultant's report and the school's description of the career mobility program, it was the opinion of the Board that the school was in fact operating two separate programs. The Director, Mrs. Willis, was asked to meet with the members of the Board at their September, 1978 meeting in order to explain and clarify the program. Following the discussion with representatives of the College, the Board offered two alternatives (letter enclosed).

On September 22, 1978, Mrs. Willis met with members of the professional staff and discussed the action taken by the school officials on September 18, 1978 to discontinue the career mobility program. We are unable to understand how the Board's letter of September 8, 1978 could be interpreted to mean that the program should be discontinued in the middle of a semester. I likewise find it difficult to accept that a school would take such drastic measures without allowing the Board and professional staff an opportunity to clarify and interpret our letter of September 8. The Board has always worked closely with the administration and faculty of a school during the phasing out process so that the education of students currently enrolled would not be jeopardized.

I have been informed by our staff that the school does plan to present a proposal for approval of the career mobility program to the Board. If the intention of the school was to follow the Board's second alternative, we do not understand why the career mobility program was discontinued in this manner.

The statutory authority of the Board of Nurse Examiners with respect to nursing programs is found in Article 4518, Section 1, V.A.T.S. (a copy is enclosed for your convenience). The Board does approve the curricula of nursing programs which meet the prescribed rules and regulations; however, the Board does not dictate the methods and approaches used in teaching the curriculum. In fact, the rules and regulations relating to nurse education (Rules 388.03.00.001-.020) allow considerable latitude to the nursing faculty. The Board is receptive to innovative approaches which are based on sound educational principles.

One of the inherent purposes of accreditation is to provide a safeguard for the educational preparation of students and assure the graduates of their eligibility for admission to the licensing examination.

Mrs. Margaret Rowland, Executive Secretary for the Board, will aid you in your inquiry and supply you with any documentation you may need.

At the September 6 and 7, 1978 meeting of the Board of Nurse Examiners, Mrs. Billie Bell was elected President for the 1978-79 fiscal year. Future correspondence may be directed to her at 5215 Newkirk Lane; Houston, Texas 77021.

Sincerely,

Sr. Regis Maillian/mr
Sister Regis Maillian
Immediate Past President
Board of Nurse Examiners

SRM/ief

Enclosures

xc: The Honorable Dolph Briscoe
Governor, State of Texas