

February 17, 2015

Ms. Kimberly Callahan
7591 Lacy Drive
Myrtle Beach, SC 29588

Dear Ms. Callahan,

We are in receipt of your letter dated February 4, 2015 requesting information regarding our nursing program. The nursing programs offered by Horry Georgetown Technical College are a source of pride. Thus, we take your inquiry seriously and are addressing your questions herein. Educating graduates who will be taking care of the general public is a task that is not taken lightly by administration, faculty or the students. The nursing program is very difficult and, unfortunately not every student passes, despite free tutoring and faculty assistance. The purpose is to prepare graduates to provide the highest quality of nursing care for everyone in our community.

I will address your topics and specific questions within your correspondence. First, as to our tuition, Horry Georgetown Technical College maintains nearly the lowest college tuition of public colleges in South Carolina. The College has maintained this record of affordable tuition to assist families and students to pursue a college education. Tuition at Horry-Georgetown Technical College as of 2014-15 is only one out-of-pocket dollar more than our tuition ten years ago, considering the rise of inflation and utilization of lottery tuition funds. In addition to maintaining low tuition, we assist students in applying for a number of financial aid packages to include federal financial aid (PELL), Lottery Tuition Assistance, and nursing scholarships.

As to enrollment in the nursing program, the College admits 152 students into the Associate Degree Nursing program each year with 64 students admitted in the spring and 88 in the fall. To respond to completion rates, in 2013 and 2014 the HGTC completion rate for nursing students averaged 67%. To provide a frame of reference for HGTC in comparison to the other thirteen SC Technical Colleges' offering the Associate Degree in Nursing, the SC Tech System average graduation rate from 2008 to 2012 was 44.6%. HGTC's average graduation rate over the same period was 79.8%. This data shows HGTC as holding the second highest graduation rate of all the technical colleges in SC.

You requested information on the assistance provided for students enrolled in our nursing program. The nursing faculty have implemented numerous strategies to assist students and improve retention. These interventions include: 1. On campus face-to-face and online nursing tutors; 2. Instruction on test-taking strategies for nursing student every semester; 3. Students access to computer adaptive testing to practice like questions that mimic NCLEX exam questions; 4. Tutorials for students in anatomy and physiology courses; 5. Advisement and counseling; 6. Clinical rotations; and orientations to new nursing trends; 7. Required remediation prior to enrollment in sequential courses; 8. Requirement for students to complete a number of practice NCLEX-RN test items; 9. Assignment of a faculty member to coach for NCLEX success; and 10. Faculty attendance at workshops on test-taking strategies and NCLEX test writing items.

WWW.HGTC.EDU

As to the grading scale, Horry Georgetown has had a long standing pass rate of 77% for the nursing courses. Because competency in nursing theory is a critical component for safe nursing practice, the grading scale for nursing is higher than for some other courses. The grading scale of 77 or higher is common in many nursing programs. In fact, one of the colleges in SC sets 80 as the passing score for all nursing courses. The nursing grading scale has been approved by the College's administrative committee responsible for admission, curriculum and grading standards. Additionally it has been approved by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) professional accreditation agency.

As to the evaluation of the nursing program and faculty, yes, all employees undergo an annual performance review. That review is conducted in accordance with the policies and procedures of the South Carolina Technical College System. In addition, the nursing program is reviewed on a regular cycle by a national accrediting agency for which all nursing schools and universities seek professional accreditation. Our nursing program has been accredited by the ACEN, formally the National League for Nursing Accreditation Commission, since 1998. The Nursing program submits annual reports to the accreditation body and had the last on-site reaccreditation visit in October of 2011. The next scheduled on-site visit for accreditation is scheduled for the fall of 2019.

Your letter included an attached page from the "News Center" dated in 2012. It is a fact that at that time we had 44 of 45 students pass the NCLEX. Students sit for the NCLEX every quarter and the scores are provided to each college offering nursing programs.

Again, I would like to thank you for asking us to answer your questions. We are proud of our nursing graduates performance both while enrolled in the program and even more so when they provide health care throughout our communities. On behalf of the College, we would welcome a visit with you to tour our nursing classes and instructional facilities. If you wish to visit HGTC, please contact my office at (843) 477-2166.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christy Cimineri". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Christy Cimineri, RN, DNP, CNE
Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs
Nursing and Associated Healthcare Sciences
Horry Georgetown Technical College

cc: Governor Nikki Haley
Congressman Tom Rice

February 4, 2015

To who may take concern in this issue?

I am writing to see if I can get some answers to some serious questions that I have about your college.

I have one current student at Horry George Town Technical College, and one past at Coastal Carolina University. It has recently come to my attention the graduation rate of nursing students at the HGTC grand strand campus is pretty poor. I have seen multiple chat centers of current and past students stating not to waste your time or money on this program. It is set up to do nothing but enrich the pockets of the school and professors and leave the students deep in debt and with no degree. I went to the website and researched threw The National Center for Education Statistics to educate myself well the site is not current the last was from 2012. I did read a post from late last year stating the graduation rate of the nursing program last spring fell in the 15% range from what had originally started the course. I find this to be rather disturbing, and the fall rate wasn't much better of 22%. We are supposed to be educating our young adults not failing them and collecting what they have to repay which is money.

The course in my opinion is set up as a failure. I understand the importance of grades but more importantly knowing how to do the job. The college appears to be focusing more on the grade part versus ability to do the job. Most Colleges and Universities I have either gone to or dealt with have high standards as well however to set a grade rate of 77 or your dropped is ridiculous. These students are doing nothing but memorizing the material instead of truly knowing how the body should work. I know programs just as important as nursing who accept 70-75 for grades. To collect tuition and fees from adults only to fail them and have them return and collect again is an issue. We need to take into account most of the students are working fulltime have families and fulltime classes therefore to have a program with this type of failure rate in my opinion needs to be relooked at. If we cannot get student where they need to be in schooling with a successful program then we need to get rid of the program. 15-22% is not successful and should not be allowed to continue. The professors need to enjoy teaching, have compassion and want to see students excel in which I have been told HGTC lacks along all these lines. Is this a college of money or learning? Maybe we need to take the stand that the State of Minnesota took teachers get paid by the students performance.

The questions I would like answered by HGTC along the Nursing program are as follows:

- 1) What is the number of nursing students currently in the actual program.
- 2) How many started in this program
- 3) What was the graduation rate of the last 2 years
- 4) What's being done to ensure students are excelling in this program
- 5) When was the last time this program and its professors were evaluated on their performance?
- 6) Why are you requiring a 77% on everything assignment/quiz/test when a 70% is acceptable at most University's?

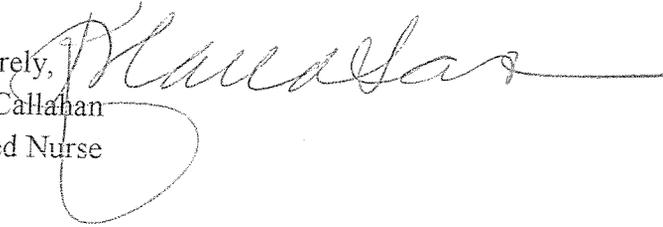
The issues I have with Coastal Carolina University are somewhat the same. I had a student slotted for graduation needed 2 classes was enrolled when oh my we have to cancel one class. Leaving my student unable to graduate and even more tuition needing to be paid. Lots of building and making things pretty is it being done on the backs of our students? If you are unable to provide to our student on part of your own fault why are our students paying for it. Most recently the amount of student who enrolled at the University without housing. Tuition collected and to many students how does this happen.

My question to the University is:

- 1) What's being done to ensure courses are not being cancelled
- 2) Why are our students responsible for the tuition when the university should be
- 3) What's being done to ensure the safety of student walking at night since the college employees have taken over just about all the parking.

I would appreciate some type of honest answers as my student is questioning her chosen career path in nursing but questions the ability to pass a failure set up program. I realize these are a lot of accusations that is why I am coming to the source for answers. It sickens me to think we are taking the lively hood away from adults and Veterans and leaving them with nothing but debt and the feelings of being failures.

Sincerely,
Kim Callahan
Retired Nurse



Cc: HGTC, Coastal Carolina, South Carolina Colleges and Universities, Wbtw New investigation, Congressman Tom Rice and Governor Haley

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- HGTC Nursing Students Lead the Nation

HGTC nursing grads lead the nation

Nurses graduating from Horry Georgetown Technical College rank measurably higher on the national nursing exam than most others in the state and nation do, according to first quarter scores on the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX), a mandatory test for nurses. Prof. Christy Cimineri, chair of HGTC's nursing program, said 44 of 45 HGTC students who took the test between January and March of this year passed, resulting in a pass rate of 97.78%. The average pass rate for SC was 93%, and, nationally, the average pass rate was 90%.

Among state colleges with more than ten test-takers, Midlands Technical College, the Medical University of SC and Greenville Technical College exceeded this rate, with 100% of thirty-seven graduates passing for MTC, 11 of 11 graduates passing at MUSC and 98.41% passing at GTC, or 62 of 63 passing.

NCLEX reported further that 91.8% of nursing graduates from Clemson University passed, compared with 89% from the University of South Carolina-Aiken and 95% from Francis Marion University.

"These high scores among HGTC nursing graduates measure two important indicators," HGTC President Neyle Wilson said. "They prove that faculty invest the time necessary to prepare excellent nurses, and students devote themselves to achieving their best in this highly competitive profession."

Professor Cimineri said 70 new nursing students are expected to graduate from HGTC on May 13.

- See more at:

http://www.hgtc.edu/about_hgtc/news_center/news16.html#sthash.vMsKvAVn.dpuf

Taken Directly From
HGTC WEBSITE WHEN WAS
THIS WRITTEN AND WHEN WERE
THESE STATS TAKEN (YEAR).