

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT
BOARD RULE 400.0100.00
ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW – NATIONAL LICENSURE AND CERTIFICATION EXAMINATIONS
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING: MARCH 25, 2010

Belmont Technical College values fostering students’ holistic development as lifelong learners. Measurements of students’ performance on registry and certification examinations serve as key indicators of students’ progress toward mastering general education and technical core curriculum elements and becoming lifelong learners. Both general education and technical core outcomes demonstrate students’ success in acquiring knowledge and skills for meaningful employment.

Nursing students who are enrolled in the Practical Nursing (PN) and Associate’s Degree Nursing (ADN) programs at BTC are required to pass the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) before they receive professional licensure. Medical assisting students are encouraged to test for the Certified Medical Assistant (CMA) credential which is awarded by the American Association of Medical Assistants. Emergency Medical Services training programs at BTC are evaluated by the Ohio Department of Public Safety. First time pass rates of students on state examinations are used as criteria for program accreditation. This report presents data for BTC students’ pass rates on national licensure, (NCLEX), certification, (CMA), and emergency medical services National Registry Exams.

Data

Data for testing pass rates on registry and certification exams in the Practical Nursing, Associate’s Degree Nursing, Medical Assisting, and Emergency Medical Services examinations are presented in four charts. Charts 1, and 2 show percentages of students who were successful in passing the NCLEX on the first time and the benchmarks against which the passing rates are measured. Chart 3, *CMA results, Medical Assisting Program*, shows pass results for the Certified Medical Assistant exam. Charts 4, 5 and 6 show the percentages of students passing the Ohio Department of Safety’s Paramedic, EMT Intermediate, and EMT Basic exams.

Chart 1, *NCLEX results, Practical Nursing Program*

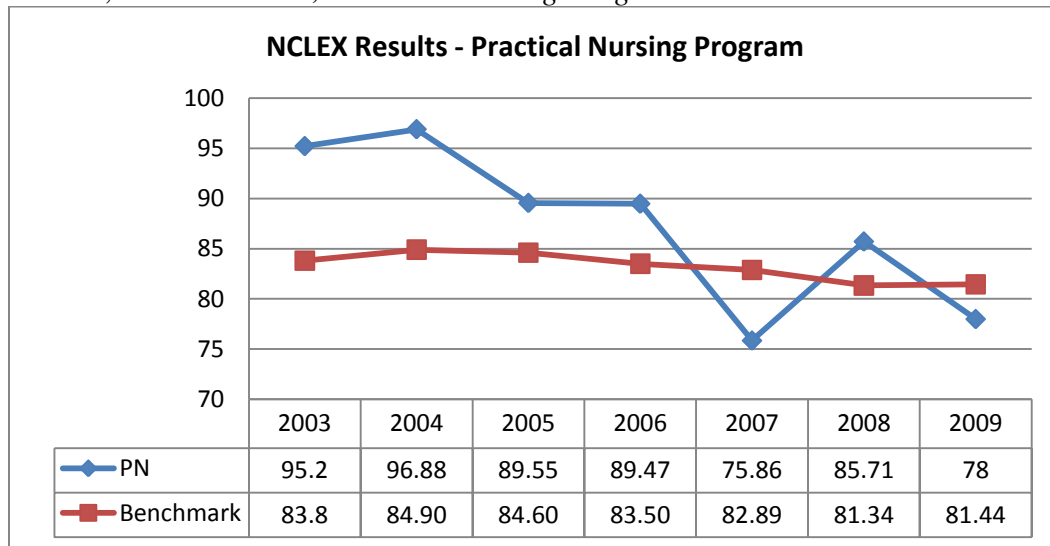


Chart 2, NCLEX results, Associate's Degree Nursing Program

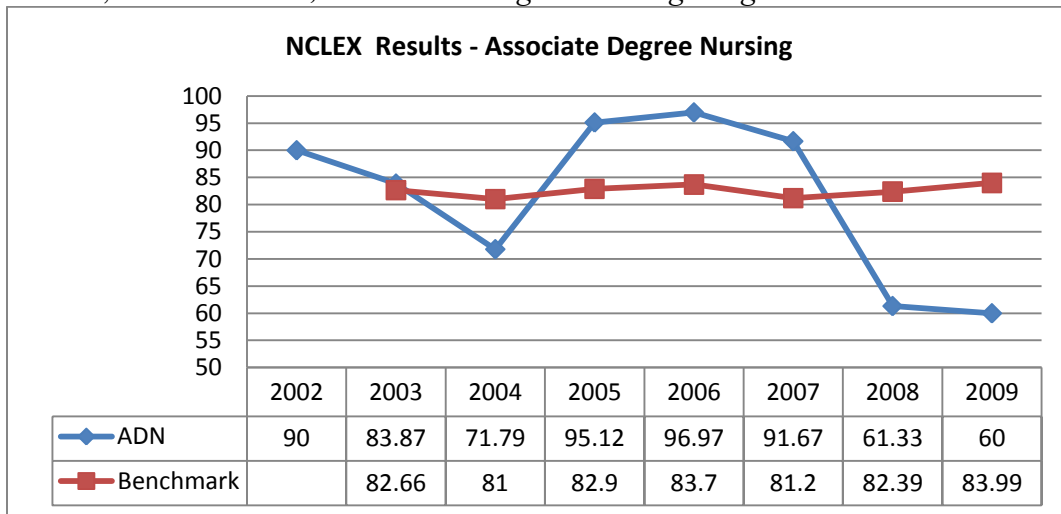


Chart 3, CMA exam results, Medical Assisting Program

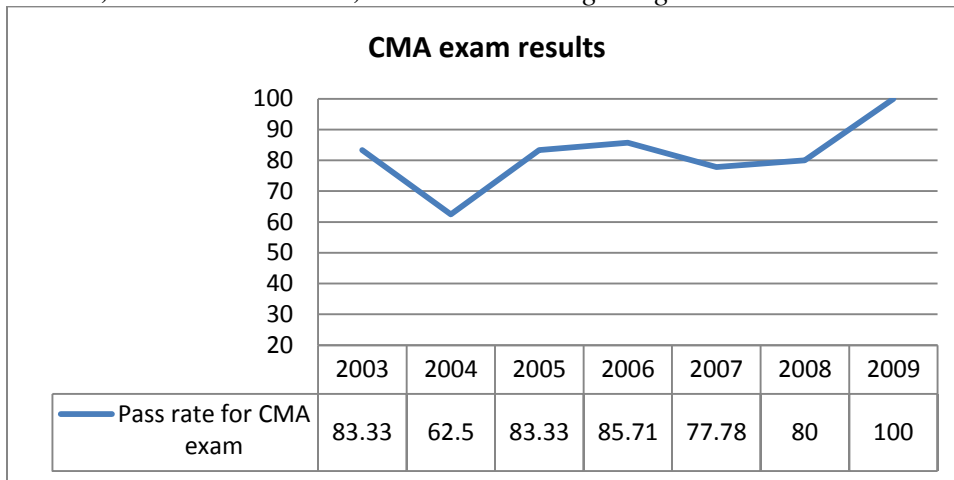


Chart 4, Emergency Medical Services, testing results-Paramedic

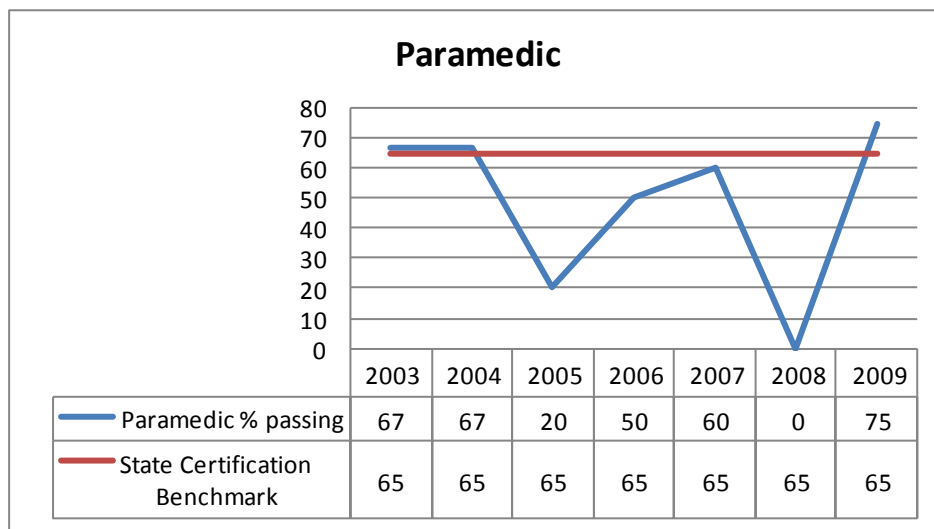


Chart 5, *Emergency Medical Services, testing results-EMT Intermediate*

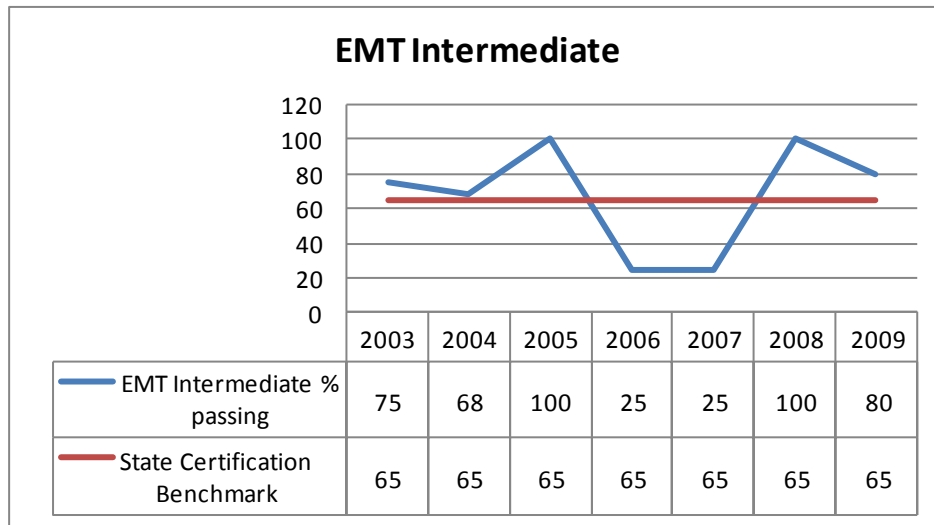
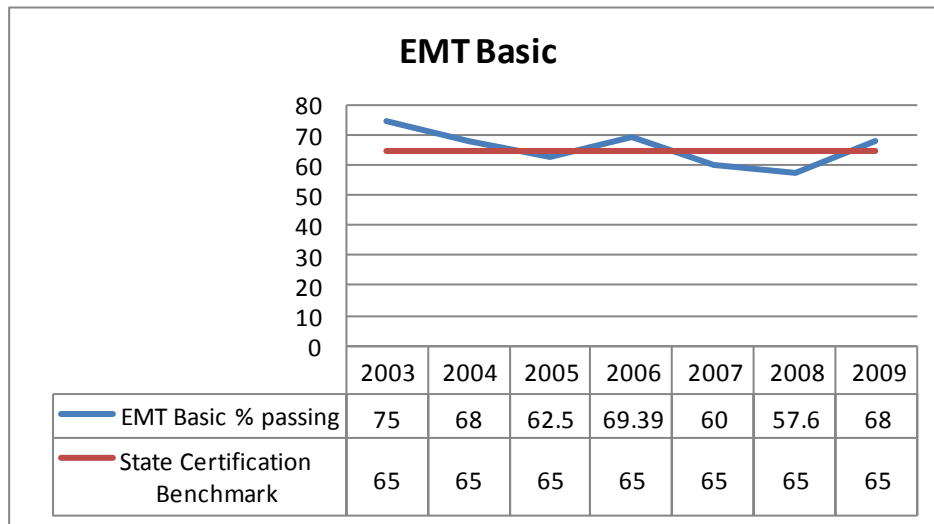


Chart 6, *Emergency Medical Services, testing results-EMT Basic*



Analysis

Practical Nursing Program

NCLEX is the national licensing examination for graduates of practical and registered nursing programs. In order for a student to pass the NCLEX exam the student must perform above the passing standard. The test is constructed to include eight content areas in which students are assessed and rated. Outcomes are expressed in one of three ways for each content area: *below the passing standard*, *near the passing standard*, or *above the passing standard*. The student as well as the nursing program is notified of the student’s performance overall and in each content area. Data in this report are aggregated for students who took the exam and for results in the eight content areas.

The Ohio Board of Nursing (OBN) sets the NCLEX pass rate benchmark for the schools of nursing. Ohio’s benchmark is 95% of the national average. The benchmark for the PN program in 2009 was 81.44%. The OBN evaluates the results for first time candidates taking the test for licensing in Ohio. Candidate results from outside Ohio are not included in our report.

BTC's pass rate for the PN program for first time test takers in 2009 was 78 percent. This is below the established benchmark. Results in 2009 were lower than results in 2008. Nursing faculty members and administrators addressed this outcome by compiling an action plan submitted to the Board of Nursing. Specific elements of the plan can be found in the Conclusions/Recommendations segment of this report.

Associate Degree Nursing

Results of NCLEX testing for 2009 show a 60% pass rate, and are below the 83.99 percent benchmark established by the Ohio Board of Nursing. The results for 2009 also show a 1 percent decline from 2008 when the pass rate was 61 percent. The Nursing faculty members and administrators addressed this outcome by compiling an action plan submitted to the Ohio Board of Nursing. Specific elements of the plan can be found in the Conclusions/Recommendations segment of this report.

Medical Assisting Program

The Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) sets a benchmark for passing scores on the Certified Medical Assistant examination. In 2009, the benchmark for accreditation of a program was set at 70 percent. There were 16 graduates in the Medical Assisting Program during 2009. Seven students took the CMA examination and all of those students achieved passing scores on the exam. Program faculty members are working to increase the number of graduates who take the CMA examination, as a future requirement will be that all students take the exam.

Emergency Medical Services

The Ohio State Board of Emergency Medical Services is a state agency responsible for accrediting Belmont's emergency medical services programs. The agency sets a benchmark for first-time testing pass rates on national registry examinations for students enrolled in paramedic and EMT programs. In 2009, the benchmark for pass rates on the paramedic, EMT intermediate and EMT basic tests was set at 65 percent. Four students took the Paramedic State Certification examination, and three students (75%) passed on the first attempt. There were 29 students taking the EMT basic test in 2009. Of those students, 20 (68%) passed the exam on the first attempt. Five students attempted the EMT Intermediate certificate examination, and four of those students (80%) passed the test on their first attempt. All programs achieved the 65 percent first-time pass rate.

Conclusions/Recommendations

Practical Nursing Program

The pass rate for Belmont graduates in the Practical Nursing Program is three percentage points below the benchmark. Recommendations for the 2010 PN program include the following:

- Increase active learning and critical thinking activities in both the classroom and lab settings
- Administer the comprehensive exit test during the 9th week of the final quarter. Any student not meeting the benchmark must complete a prescribed remediation plan
- Reinforce personal responsibility to review for the NCLEX test and to schedule a test as soon as possible following graduation
- Encourage students to submit their applications to the Board of Nursing prior to graduation

- Any student receiving an academic alert will automatically be referred to the nursing tutor
- Incorporate simulation into lab courses to facilitate critical thinking
- Implement medication administration in every clinical course after PNP 100
- Implement more alternate-format NCLEX style questions in course assessments.

Associate Degree Nursing

These results fall below the benchmark. Pass rates between the day and evening programs were the same. The director and assistant director have reviewed the test plan results for specific areas of weakness in the curriculum. There are no clear indications of specific areas of weakness. Review of admission ranking, mid-curricular test performance and HESI exit test performance do not indicate any patterns or trends.

Recommendations and action plans:

- Second level faculty will incorporate NCLEX topic review into ADN 285 in spring quarter [students will use a new textbook with case studies and review questions, content specialist faculty will conduct a specific session in the course].
- Students will take the HESI exit test during week 3 of spring quarter. Any student not meeting the benchmark will perform the accompanying remediation plan and retest in week 6. Any student still not meeting the benchmark will be assigned an NCLEX coach [2nd level faculty] to develop an individual education plan with the student. The student will take the HESI exit test for the 3rd time during week 10. [The HESI representative will come on campus to demonstrate and explain to the students the use of the remediation package.]
- All 2nd level students will attend the live review course for NCLEX the week of graduation.
- All 2nd level students will be encouraged to submit their applications for licensure to the Ohio Board of Nursing before graduation to ensure a more timely assignment of an NCLEX test date.
- Faculty have been and will continue to reinforce the importance of personal responsibility in reviewing for NCLEX as well as the importance of scheduling the test date as soon as possible following graduation.
- 1st level students will take the HESI mid-curricular test at the end of spring quarter. Any student not meeting the benchmark will complete the accompanying remediation program prior to beginning classes in fall quarter.
- 1st level students will begin in this spring quarter to implement the care plan format used in second level.
- Faculty will investigate and incorporate more active learning in the classroom and lab settings.
- Faculty will incorporate more alternative-format NCLEX style questions into course assessments.
- Mid-fidelity simulation manikins are being purchased for the nursing labs to facilitate active learning and critical thinking.

Medical Assisting Program

The program chair plans to continue offering the program in 2010 according to the strategies that were successful in 2008. An Exam Review book is used during the Seminar course in order to help the students become accustomed to reviewing course material between graduation and the date upon which they take the certification examination. In addition to these strategies a program goal of increasing the test-taking rate of 80% has been set, and program faculty will be encouraging students to take the certification exam. In addition, faculty members are encouraging students to understand that certification in medical assisting affects the likelihood of finding professional positions following graduation.

Emergency Medical Services

In the *Paramedic* programs, students are now required to participate in on-line quizzes for each chapter of the text book. In addition, several links have been added to the JICS portal for their use and a student practice on-line test bank CD is included with their text. These changes allow students to monitor their progress instantaneously and provide multiple options for practice testing, information review, and other interactive material. We will continue to monitor exam scores and make additional changes. Computerized state exams are now offered by the Student Success Center and the staff has been very receptive to meeting the needs of our students by assisting with test set up and flexibility of scheduling. Additional changes to the students' handbooks have been made to help facilitate hands-on learning and clinical completion. We have added directions for the JICS system, state testing, and course paperwork completion and practice skill pages have been added to the handbook. We will be reevaluating these changes in upcoming courses.

Students in previous years had difficulty completing the required clinicals in a timely manner, extending the period between course completion and state examination, which may affect pass rates. In an effort to eliminate stumbling blocks, additional clinical sites are now available and several more are being pursued. Additionally, scheduling for these sites is now available during all open college hours. A clinical scheduling handbook has been placed in the program chair's office and is available at every class for student use. Students are welcome to schedule until the required time period for each site is filled. This allows for much more flexibility. Suggestions made by the Ohio Division of EMS have also been made to the clinical schedule, allowing the students to complete their hospital based internships early in the program and their field internships nearer the end of their course work. In this way students develop the skills necessary for success early on and near the completion of the program will be functioning much as they will in the workforce. We believe these changes to be most important to facilitating the success of students in our now considerable larger classes.

In the *Intermediate* program, students are now required to participate in on-line quizzes for each chapter of the text book. In addition, several links have been added to the JICS portal for their use and a student practice, on-line test bank CD is included with their text. We will continue to monitor exam scores and make additional changes. Computerized state exams are now offered by the Student Success Center and the staff has been very receptive to meeting the needs of our students by assisting with test set up and flexibility of scheduling. As in the Paramedic program, changes to the students' handbooks have been made to help facilitate hands-on learning and clinical completion. These handbook changes include directions for the JICS system, and the addition of information related to state testing, and clinical paperwork completion and practice skill pages.

Since changes implemented after the 2006 accreditation, our intermediate program traditionally has pass rates that meet and/or exceed state and national standards. The program chair and instructors will continue to monitor the program and make additional changes that may make Belmont students even more successful.

Strategies implemented for the *EMT Basic* program mirror those initiated in the intermediate and paramedic courses. Students are now required to participate in on-line quizzes for each chapter of the text book. Several links have been added to the JICS portal for students' use and a student practice test bank CD is included with their text. Monitoring of exam scores is being considered before additional changes are recommended. Computerized state exams are now offered by the Student Success Center and the staff has been very receptive to meeting the needs of our students by assisting with test set-up and flexibility of scheduling. Changes made to strengthen the program will be reevaluated throughout upcoming courses.