

**PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF WAIVER OF DIRECTOR QUALIFICATIONS  
TEXAS A&M INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY IN LAREDO, TEXAS  
CANSECO SCHOOL OF NURSING  
BACCALAUREATE DEGREE NURSING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

**SUMMARY OF REQUEST:**

Consider the petition from Texas A&M International University Canseco School of Nursing in Laredo, Texas to extend the waiver of director qualifications on behalf of Natalie Burkhalter, MSN, RN, FNP and the recommendation from the Education Liaison Committee (ELC) regarding the petition.

**HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:**

- Dr. Susan Walker retired as the Director of the Canseco School of Nursing on May 31, 2007.
- A national search which began during Fall 2006 for a new director produced no suitable candidate.
- At the July 2007 meeting, the Board approved a waiver for Natalie Burkhalter, MSN, RN, FNP to be appointed as Interim Director while a search continues. Ms. Burkhalter holds all qualifications to serve as director of the BSN program except she does not have a doctoral degree.
- Texas A&M International University has made valiant efforts to recruit a new dean for the school of nursing including:
  - changing the job description to reflect a possible joint appointment with Texas A&M Health Science Center if research opportunities were of interest to the candidate;
  - sending representatives to NLN, NONPF, AACH, APHA and TNP conferences to seek candidates;
  - contracting a search firm to aggressively assist in the search.
- The search has not yielded a suitable candidate.
- Because of a concern that a new dean may not be in place before her waiver expired,
- Ms. Burkhalter has requested that the waiver be extended for another year or until a new dean is in place, whichever occurs first.
- A letter from Ms. Burkhalter dated April 2, 2008 outlined efforts to recruit a new dean and requested an extension of the waiver.
- Members of the ELC reviewed the information and recommend approval of the extension.

**PROS AND CONS:**

Pros:

- Texas A&M International University has actively engaged in a search for a new dean for the school of nursing in good faith.
- In an email dated June 10, 2008 Ms. Burkhalter indicated two candidates are being interviewed by the search firm.
- Ms. Burkhalter has provided excellent leadership to the school of nursing during the 2007-2008 academic year.
- She has been involved with management of the baccalaureate degree nursing program since its inception.
- The Texas A&M International Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Educational Program has maintained high NCLEX-RN® examination pass rates with commendations for many years.

Recent NCLEX-RN® Results:

YEAR	Approval Status	NCLEX-RN® Examination Pass Rates	Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)
2007	Full	94.87%	37/39
2006	Full	92.86%	26/28
2005	Full	93.83%	23/24

Cons:

- A vigorous search has been in progress for two years.
- Ms. Burkhalter phoned board staff on June 13, 2008 with a report that there are presently no viable candidates and seeking board advice.

**EDUCATION LIAISON COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:**

Members of the Education Liaison Committee voted to recommend approval of the extension of the waiver of director qualifications for Natalie Burkhalter, MSN, RN, FNP as Interim Director of the Canseco School of Nursing at Texas A&M International University. A letter dated May 20, 2008 was forwarded to Dr. Dan Jones, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Texas A&M International University, advising him that the waiver has been extended for Ms. Burkhalter's appointment effective June 1, 2008 pending Board approval at the July Board meeting (Attachment #1).

**STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Move to approve the extension of the waiver for the appointment of Natalie Burkhalter, MSN, RN, FNP as Interim Director of the Canseco School of Nursing at Texas A&M International University based on the recommendation from the Education Liaison Committee as indicated in the attached letter (Attachment # 2).

May 20, 2008

Dr. Dan R. Jones  
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Texas A&M International University  
5201 University Boulevard  
Laredo, Texas 78041

Dear Dr. Jones:

This will acknowledge receipt of a letter dated April 2, 2008 from Natalie C. Burkhalter, MSN, RN, FNP describing the efforts of Texas A&M International University to recruit a new dean for the Canseco School of Nursing. In order to insure that the program is not left without a director if the position of dean is not filled before June 1, 2008, Ms. Burkhalter requested the Board to extend the waiver allowing her to continue to serve as Interim Director of the Canseco School of Nursing for another year or until a new dean is named, whichever occurs first. The request for extension of waiver and an explanation of the status of the search were reviewed by the Education Liaison Committee (ELC) of the Board and the waiver was approved on April 21, 2008. This decision requires ratification by the Board at the next scheduled Board meeting on July 18-19, 2008.

Since the ELC approved the extension of the waiver, Ms. Burkhalter may continue to serve as Interim Director of Canseco School of Nursing until June 1, 2009 pending Board approval in July. If a new dean is named before June 1, 2009, Ms. Burkhalter will step down from the position.

Please be assured that our staff is available to assist Ms. Burkhalter in her role as Interim Director in any way feasible.

If you have any questions, please contact board staff at (512) 305-6814.

Sincerely,

Janice I. Hooper, PhD, RN  
Nursing Consultant for Education

copy: Natalie Burkhalter, MSN, RN, FNP, TAMIU

**DRAFT LETTER**

July 21, 2008

Dr. Dan R. Jones  
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Texas A&M International University  
5201 University Boulevard  
Laredo, Texas 78041-1900

Dear Dr. Jones:

This letter is to notify you that the request to extend the waiver for the appointment of Natalie Burkhalter, MSN, RN, FNP as Interim Director of the Canseco School of Nursing was discussed at the July 17-18, 2008 meeting of the Texas Board of Nursing. Based upon the discussion and the recommendation from the Education Liaison Committee of the Board, it was the decision of the Board to extend the waiver and to ratify the continuing appointment of Natalie Burkhalter, MSN, RN, FNP as Interim Director of the Canseco School of Nursing at Texas A&M International University effective June 1, 2008. Ms. Burkhalter's appointment may extend until June 1, 2009 or until a new dean is named, whichever occurs first.

Be assured that our staff is available to assist Ms. Burkhalter in her role as Interim Director in any way feasible. We wish the search committee our best as they continue the search for a new dean of Canseco School of Nursing at Texas A&M International University.

If additional information is needed, please contact board staff at (512) 305-6814.

Sincerely,

Linda R. Rounds, PhD, RN, FNP  
President

Janice I. Hooper, PhD, RN  
Nursing Consultant for Education

copy: Natalie Burkhalter, MSN, RN, FNP