

**BEFORE THE VIRGINIA BOARD OF NURSING**

**IN RE: MOUNTAIN GATEWAY COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
ASSOCIATE DEGREE NURSING EDUCATION PROGRAM  
Formerly known as Dabney S. Lancaster Community College  
Program Code: US28406700  
Case Number: 226052**

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**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE EDUCATION SPECIAL CONFERENCE  
COMMITTEE**

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**Jurisdiction and Procedural History**

Pursuant to Virginia Code §§ 2.2-4019 and 54.1-2400(10), the Education Special Conference Committee (“Committee”) of the Virginia Board of Nursing (“Board”), held an informal conference on June 18, 2024 in Henrico County, Virginia, to inquire into evidence that Mountain Gateway Associate Degree Nursing Education Program (“Mountain Gateway”), may have violated certain laws and regulations governing the operation of associate degree nursing education programs in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Present at this proceeding on behalf of Mountain Gateway were: Catherine Hiler, R.N., program director and Ben Worth, Vice President of Academic Affairs. Mountain Gateway was represented by Noelle Shaw-Bell, Esquire.

Upon consideration of the evidence, the Committee makes the following Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law and recommends that the Board adopt the following Order.

**Recommended Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law**

1. Mountain Gateway Community College (“Mountain Gateway”), was granted approval to operate an associate degree nursing education program in the Commonwealth of Virginia on September 15, 1971, under the name Dabney S. Lancaster Community College. On July 1, 2022, the Board was notified of the foregoing name change.

2. Mountain Gateway violated 18 VAC 90-27-60(B)(1) of the Regulations for Nursing Education Programs (“Regulations”) in that during its fall 2022 semester, its number of faculty was insufficient to prepare students to achieve the objectives of the educational program. Specifically:

a. Mountain Gateway lacked sufficient faculty for students’ clinical rotations. As a result, students’ overall planned clinical hours were decreased from 180 hours to 152 hours for that semester.

b. Students’ clinical experiences were preceptor-led instead of faculty-led. Mountain Gateway’s program director had difficulty finding enough preceptors for students. Further, some students were unable to complete the reduced number of clinical hours with the available preceptors, *infra*.

3. Mountain Gateway violated 18 VAC 90-27-100 of the Regulations in that many students did not complete the required number of clinical hours in the fall 2022 semester, even though clinical hours had been decreased, *supra*. Specifically:

a. Students were supposed to complete 96 hours of medical-surgical nursing; however, according to Mountain Gateway’s clinical rotation schedules:

i. Students A and B were only scheduled for 84 medical-surgical nursing clinical hours.

ii. Student C was only scheduled for 90 medical-surgical nursing clinical hours.

b. Students were supposed to complete 16 hours of maternal/infant nursing; however, according to Mountain Gateway’s clinical rotation schedule:

i. Students B, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, and V were not scheduled for any maternal/infant nursing clinical hours.

ii. Students C and W were scheduled for only eight maternal/infant nursing clinical hours.

c. Students were supposed to complete 8 hours of mental health nursing; however, according to Mountain Gateway's clinical rotation schedule, Students D, M, and X were not scheduled for any mental health nursing clinical hours.

d. Students were supposed to complete 6 hours of mental health nursing simulation; however, Mountain Gateway provided its students with only 4 hours of mental health nursing simulation.

5. At the informal conference, Mountain Gateway representatives described implementing new software for tracking and documenting students' clinical hours. They stated they began using the new software in the fall 2023 semester. The program director stated that it would minimize documentation errors and make it easier to track students' clinical hours.

6. The program director also described how some faculty needed additional training in documenting students' clinical hours.

7. The program director told the Committee that Mountain Gateway routinely allows students to pass courses without having completed the required number of clinical hours. If students are missing clinical hours for a course, they are allowed to make up those missing hours in subsequent semesters. She stated that Students A through X were allowed to complete their missing hours, *supra*, in subsequent semesters.

### **Recommended Order**

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, the Committee recommends that the Board issue an Order as follows:

1. Mountain Gateway Associate Degree Nursing Education Program ("Mountain Gateway") is placed on CONDITIONAL APPROVAL.

2. Mountain Gateway shall submit to a survey visit by the Board within 12 months of the date of entry of this Order. Board staff will coordinate the survey visit date.

3. By December 31, 2024, Mountain Gateway shall provide to the Board reports from their new clinical hour documentation software. Specifically, Mountain Gateway shall provide reports for all enrolled students from the fall 2023 semester, spring 2024 semester, summer 2024 semester, and fall 2024 semester. These reports shall include each student's required clinical hours and actual clinical hours, by course.

4. Within 90 days of the date of entry of this Order, Mountain Gateway shall submit to the Board a report regarding faculty development on documentation of clinical hours and student clinical performance.

5. Within 60 days of the date of entry of this Order, Mountain Gateway shall:

a. Provide a copy of this Order to all current and prospective students, to all faculty members, and to the program's advisory board;

b. Publish this Order on its website; and

c. Update all publications and promotional materials to reflect that Mountain Gateway is on conditional approval.

6. Upon review of compliance with the terms and conditions of this Order, the Board will further consider Mountain Gateway's approval status, which may require its appearance before a Committee of the Board.

7. Mountain Gateway shall comply with all of the Board's regulations for maintaining an approved associate degree nursing education program in Virginia.

8. Any violation of the terms and conditions of this Order or any law or regulation affecting the operation of nursing education programs in the Commonwealth of Virginia may constitute grounds

for the withdrawal of approval of Mountain Gateway, and an administrative proceeding shall be convened to determine whether such approval shall be withdrawn.

Reviewed and approved

By Cynthia Swineford, R.N., MSN, CNE

Chair, Education Conference Special Committee