

# **River Valley Community College schedules site visit in nursing program accreditation process**

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River Valley Community College will soon face its final hurdle in regaining national accreditation for its associate degree nursing program.

The college scheduled its site visit with the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing Feb. 10 through 12, the college announced.

After the site visit, the commission will decide whether or not to accredit the program. College officials have previously said they are hopeful the associate degree nursing program will regain its national accreditation in time for May 2016 graduation.

National accreditation is important because it's required by the state's board of nursing.

River Valley doesn't offer any other nursing programs.

The commission suspended the nursing program's accreditation in August 2013, due to low scores on the state licensing exam over a five-year-period.

The college had failed to prove that faculty develop and regularly review curriculum for the program and had failed to show that instruction meets best-practice standards, according to the accreditation website. In addition, it was not adequately measuring student learning, the commission's website says.

River Valley responded by suspending classes for first-year nursing students and did not admit freshmen into the program in fall 2013.

The college's main campus is in Claremont, but River Valley also operates an academic center in Keene, offering courses locally.

In January, the college achieved candidacy status with the commission, which gave it two years to complete a self-study and undergo a site visit.

Receiving candidacy status allows students currently enrolled in the associate nursing program to be grandfathered in as graduating from a nationally accredited program.

In October, River Valley received full approval for its registered nurse program from the N.H. Board of Nursing. Under administrative rules, the approval lasts for five years.

The college needed approval from the state before it could receive candidacy status from the commission.

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