



Admissions, Enrollment, and Graduation Trends in Vocational Nursing Programs

2015

This update presents data for the 92¹ vocational nursing (VN) programs in Texas during the 2015 reporting year, including:

- 86 generic programs
 - 65 in public colleges/universities
 - 17 in career schools/colleges
 - 1 in private colleges/universities
 - 3 in private/public hospitals
- 5 Multiple Entry/Exit Programs (MEEP)⁶
 - All in public colleges/universities

The Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies (TCNWS) collected data in the 2015 Board of Nursing’s (BON) Nursing Education Program Information Survey (NEPIS) that was available online as of October 1, 2015. The reporting period was academic year (AY) 2014-2015 (September 1, 2014 – August 31, 2015) unless otherwise noted. TCNWS collaborated with the BON in the design and dissemination of the survey.

¹Data collected from the military-based VN program were analyzed separately.

Qualified Applications to Vocational Nursing Programs

Table 1 lists data on qualified applications² and admissions to VN programs from 2006 through 2015.

- Qualified applications were those that met all criteria for admission based on the standards set by individual programs.
 - There were 9,305 qualified applications in 2015, a decrease of 11.6% from 2014.³ The number of qualified applications has been steadily declining since 2011 (40.5% decrease from 2011 to 2015).
 - Of the number of qualified applications, admission was offered to 7,698, or 82.7%.
- The number of qualified applications not offered admission (QANA) decreased from 2014 to 2015 by 29.9%.
- 47 programs accepted all qualified applications, 6 more than in 2014.

The 44 programs that did not accept all qualified applications were asked to rank in order of importance the reasons why qualified applications were not offered admission.

- Lack of clinical space was rated as an important or very important reason for not offering admission to all qualified applications by 36 programs (81.8% of programs that did not accept all qualified applications).

Table 1. Qualified Applications, Admissions & QANA, 2006 - 2015

	Enrollment Capacity ^{4,5}	Qualified Applications	Offered Admission	Qualified Applications Not Offered Admission
2006	-	13,397	6,900	6,497 (48.5%)
2007	-	13,355	7,598	5,757 (43.1%)
2008	7,952	12,522	7,944	4,528 (36.2%)
2009	8,468	11,644	8,552	3,112 (26.7%)
2010	8,685	13,681	8,654	5,027 (36.7%)
2011	9,776	15,648	9,480	6,168 (39.4%)
2012	8,989	13,839	8,929	4,910 (35.5%)
2013	8,947	11,061	8,114	2,947 (26.6%)
2014	8,743	10,529	8,238	2,291 (21.8%)
2015	8,719	9,305	7,698	1,607 (17.3%)

- Programs that reported a lack of clinical space cited reasons such as competition with other nursing programs, reduced clinical opportunities for VN students or preference given to professional nursing students, and lack of clinical availability in certain geographic areas.
- Lack of budgeted faculty was rated as an important or very important reason for not offering admission to all qualified applications by 27 programs.

²Qualified applications refers to applications submitted, not individual applicants, since candidates for admission may apply to more than one nursing program.

³Candidates for admission may apply and be accepted by more than one nursing program; therefore, these data may represent some duplicated counts of individuals.

⁴The number of students offered admission may exceed enrollment capacity in order to account for students who apply to multiple programs. Data were not available for cells with dashes (-).

⁵Per the survey operational definition, enrollment capacity refers to the maximum number of students that a program can enroll in any given admission period. Enrollment capacity may be limited by Board of Nursing rules or logistical concerns (faculty size, classroom space, etc.).

Newly Enrolled Students in Vocational Nursing Programs

Table 2 and Figure 1 show the yearly change in newly enrolled, first year students from 2006 to 2015. Newly enrolled students are those who were offered admission and decided to register and enroll in the program.

- From 2014 to 2015, the number of newly enrolled students has decreased by 9.2%, from 7,225 to 6,559.

Figure 1. Newly Enrolled Students, 2006 - 2015

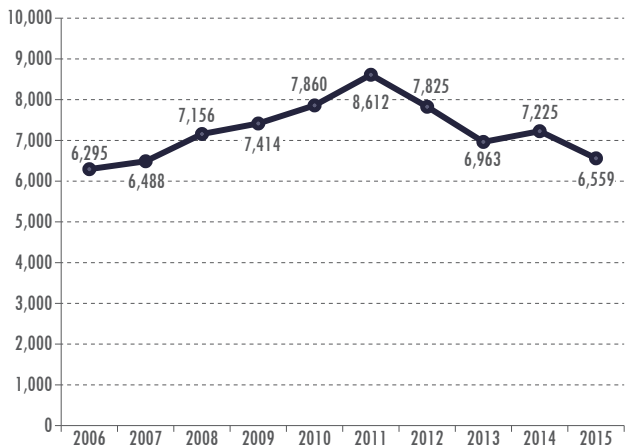


Table 2. Change in Newly Enrolled Students, 2006 - 2015

Year	Newly Enrolled Students	% Annual Enrollment Change
2006	6,295	-
2007	6,488	3.1%
2008	7,156	10.3%
2009	7,414	3.6%
2010	7,860	6.0%
2011	8,612	9.6%
2012	7,825	-9.1%
2013	6,963	-11.0%
2014	7,225	3.8%
2015	6,559	-9.2%

- There was a steady increase in the number of newly enrolled students in each year from 2006 through 2011, but the number of newly enrolled students decreased from 2011 to 2013 and after an increase in 2014 there was a decrease from 2014 to 2015.
- Since 2006, there has been an overall increase of 4.2% among newly enrolled VN students.

Total Enrollment in Vocational Nursing Programs

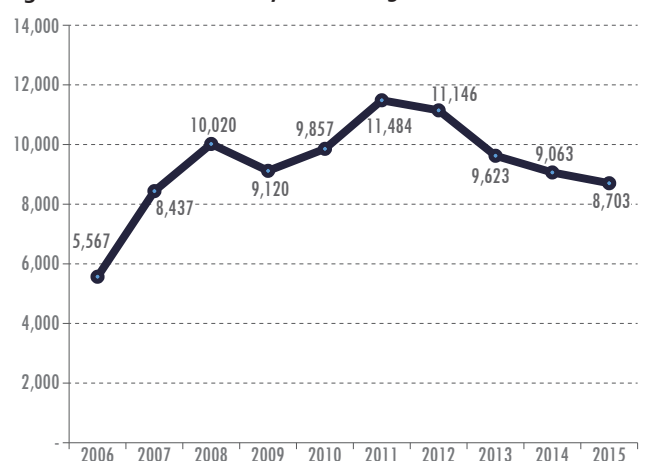
Table 3 presents the breakdown of total enrollment by program and institution type for academic year 2014-2015.

Table 3. VN Program Enrollment by Program Type, AY 2014 - 2015

		Enrollment	% of Total Enrollment
Generic	Public College/ University	4,824	55.5%
	Career Schools/ Colleges	3,463	39.8%
	Private College/ University	55	0.6%
	Hospitals	254	2.9%
MEEP	Public College/ University	107	1.2%
Total		8,703	100%

- 98.8% of enrolled students were in generic programs. There were 107 students enrolled in MEEPs⁶ during academic year 2014-2015.

Figure 2. Total Enrollment, 2006 - 2015



- 55.5% of all enrolled students were enrolled in public colleges or universities.
- 39.8% of students were enrolled in career schools or colleges, even though career schools and colleges represented only 18.7% of all VN programs.

Figure 2 (previous page) shows the fluctuating trend in total VN enrollment since 2006.

- Total VN student enrollment has declined by 4.0% since 2014, continuing a downward trend since 2011.

- However, overall, the total number of students enrolled in VN programs has increased by 56.3% between 2006 and 2015.

⁶Multiple Entry-Exit Program is an exit option which is a part of a professional nursing education program designed for students to complete course work and apply to take the NCLEX-PN® examination after they have successfully met all requirements needed for the examination.

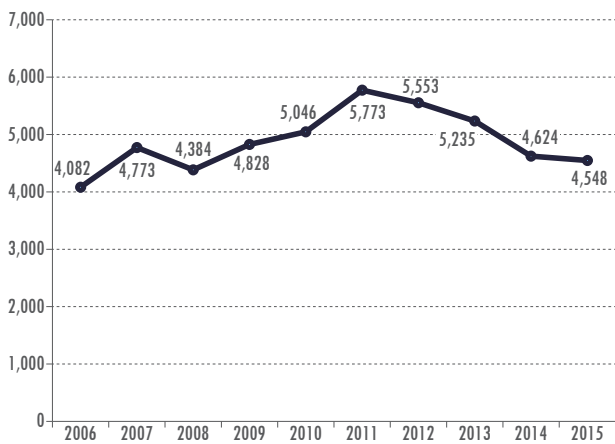
Graduates from Vocational Nursing Programs

Figure 3 shows the change in the number of VN graduates since 2006. The number of graduates has decreased since 2011, but there has been an overall increase in the number since 2006.

VN program graduates from 2006 to 2015 are shown in Table 4.

- A total of 4,548 students graduated in 2015, a decrease of 1.6% from the number of graduates in 2014.
- The number of VN graduates has increased by 11.4% since 2006.

Figure 3. Vocational Nursing Graduates, 2004 - 2015



Graduates by program and institution type are shown in Table 5.

- 97.7% of students graduated from generic programs. 106 students (2.3%) graduated from MEEPs.
- 59.6% of total graduates were from public colleges/universities.
- Career schools/colleges graduated the second largest proportion (34.5%) of vocational nursing students during the reporting period.

- Private college/university graduates comprised only 0.5% of the total number of graduates during the reporting period.

Table 4. Change in Vocational Graduates, 2006 - 2015

	Graduates	Annual Increase/Decrease in Graduates
2006	4,082	-5.5%
2007	4,773	16.9%
2008	4,384	-8.2%
2009	4,828	10.1%
2010	5,046	4.5%
2011	5,773	14.4%
2012	5,553	-3.8%
2013	5,235	-5.7%
2014	4,624	-11.7%
2015	4,548	-1.6%

Table 5. Vocational Graduates by Program Type, 2015

		Graduates	% of Total Graduates
Generic	Public College/University	2,706	59.6%
	Career Schools/Colleges	1,569	34.5%
	Private College/University	24	0.5%
	Hospitals	143	3.1%
MEEP	Public College/University	106	2.3%
Total		4,548	100%



Barriers to Increasing Graduates

Programs were asked to list barriers that they faced in increasing vocational nursing graduates in AY 2014-2015. 64 programs identified having barriers to increasing the number of graduates.⁶ Some of these barriers included:

- Poor academic preparedness of students (14 programs),
- Lack of qualified applicants (12 programs),
- Lack of clinical sites (10 programs),
- Financial difficulties/lack of financial aid (10 programs),
- Shortage of qualified faculty (7 programs),
- Competition from other programs (5 programs), and
- Applicants choosing an ADN program instead (2 programs).

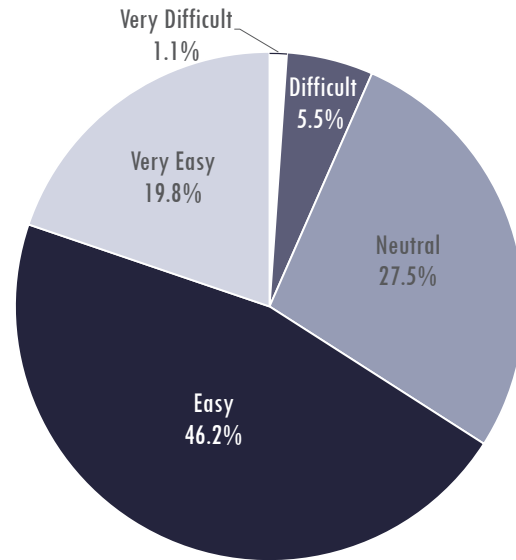
Level of Difficulty for Graduates to Find a Job in Nursing

Figure 4 shows the difficulty programs perceived with respect to their graduates finding a job in nursing.

- Over half of VN programs perceived that it was easy or very easy for their graduates to find jobs (66%).

⁶NEPIS question 54 was an open-ended question and programs could list more than one barrier to increasing the number of graduates.

Figure 4. Difficulty of VN Graduates in Finding a Job



- Only 6.6% perceived that it was difficult or very difficult for their graduates to find jobs.
- Programs whose students had difficulty finding jobs listed reasons such as acute care settings not hiring VNs and employers preferring to hire RNs over VNs.

Military Based Nursing Program

Table 6 lists data on qualified applications² and admissions to the military based VN program from 2014 and 2015.

- There were 457 qualified applications in 2015, a increase of 16.9% from 2014.
- Similar to 2014, all qualified applications were offered admission in 2015.

Newly Enrolled Students, Total Enrollment, and Graduates.

Table 7 reports the total number of newly enrolled students, total enrollment, and graduates for the military based VN program in 2014 and 2015.

- There were 457 newly enrolled students, which was also the number of total enrolled students for the military based VN program.
- In 2015, there were 352 graduates. This represented a 6.0% increase in graduates from 2014.

Table 6. Qualified Applications, Admissions & QANA for Military Based Program, 2009 - 2015

Year	Enrollment Capacity ^{4,5}	Qualified Applications	Offered Admission	Qualified Applications Not Offered Admission
2009	750	666	666	0(0%)
2010	569	-	569	0(0%)
2011	375	307	307	0(0%)
2012	465	307	307	0(0%)
2013	465	193	193	0(0%)
2014	600	391	391	0(0%)
2015	610	457	457	0(0%)

Data were not available for cells with dashes (-).

Table 7. Newly Enrolled Students, Total Enrollment & Graduates for Military Based Program, 2009 - 2015

Year	Newly Enrolled Students	Total Enrollment	Graduates
2009	666	1,333	433
2010	569	1,209	400
2011	307	601	422
2012	307	983	423
2013	191	338	277
2014	391	391	332
2015	457	457	352

