

Program Characteristics of Vocational Nursing Programs

2014

This update presents data for the 92¹ vocational nursing (VN) programs in Texas during the 2014 reporting year, including:

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

The Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies (TCNWS) collected data in the 2014 Board of Nursing's (BON) Nursing Education Program Information Survey (NEPIS) that was available online as of October 1, 2014. The reporting period was academic year (AY) 2013-2014 (September 1, 2013 – August 31, 2014) unless otherwise noted. TCNWS collaborated with the BON in the design and dissemination of the survey.

¹Excluded from these analyses are data collected from one military-based VN program.

Geographic Location of Vocational Nursing Programs

Table 1 summarizes the location of programs by type and geographic designation. Figure 1 presents the locations of the 92 vocational nursing program main campuses in Texas by metropolitan and non-metropolitan counties.

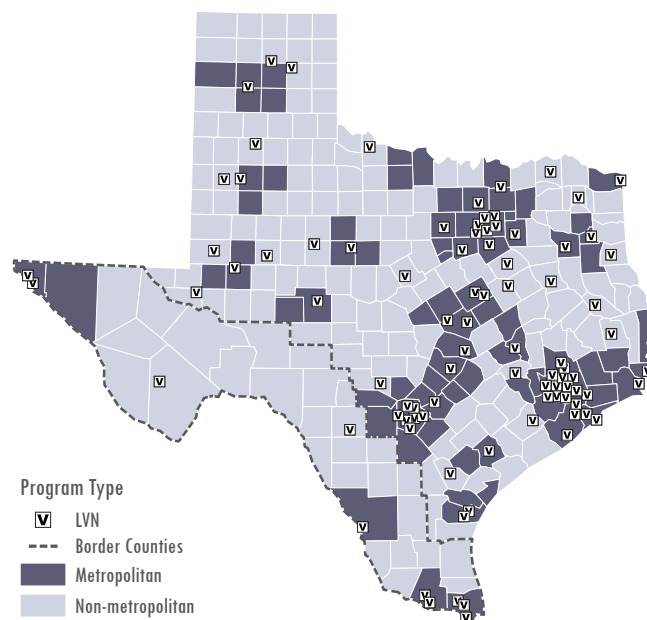
The majority (57.6%) of programs were located in a metropolitan non-border area.

- 30.4% of VN programs were located in a non-metropolitan, non-border area.
- 8 (8.7%) programs were located in a metropolitan border area.
- 3 (3.3%) VN programs were located in a non-metropolitan border area.

Table 1. Geographic Designation of Main Campuses

Program Affiliation	Geographic Designation				Total
	Metro Border	Metro Non-Border	Non-Metro Border	Non-Metro Non-Border	
Public College/University	5	37	3	25	70
Private College/University	1	0	0	1	2
Public/Private Hospital	1	0	0	2	3
Career Schools/Colleges	1	16	0	0	17
Total	8	53	3	28	92

Figure 1. Geographic Location of VN Programs, Main Campuses



Changes in the Number of Vocational Nursing Programs

Table 2 shows the number of newly opened, closed, and total VN programs by year.

- Between 2006 and 2008, many programs consolidated, leading to a decrease in total number of programs from 115 to 89.
- In 2014, there were 92 VN programs. There were 0 new programs, and 6 closures between 2013 and 2014.

Table 2. Number of Opened, Closed, and Total VN Programs, 2006-2014

	Newly Opened Programs	Closed Programs	Total Programs
2006	-	-	115
2007	2	25	92
2008	4	7	89
2009	3	0	92
2010	6	2	96
2011	2	1	97
2012	2	2	97
2013	1	0	98
2014	0	6	92

Governing Institutions

The 92 vocational nursing programs were governed by different types of institutions. These were mutually exclusive categories.

- 4 programs were governed by private/non-profit

institutions.

- 16 programs were governed by private/for-profit institutions.
- 72 programs were governed by public institutions.

Length of Curriculum in Vocational Nursing Programs

In the 2014 NEPIS, programs were asked to report the length of their vocational nursing curriculum in months.

- Program length ranged from 9 to 16 months among vocational nursing programs.

- 78 (84.8%) vocational nursing programs were 12 months in length.

Online Availability of Vocational Nursing Programs²

41 of 92 vocational nursing education programs indicated that they offered nursing courses via online technology:

- 1 program offered the entire didactic portion online.
- 18 programs offered only select nursing courses entirely online.

- 30 programs offered select nursing courses as blended/hybrid courses.

²Please note that programs may offer select courses entirely online and select courses as hybrids. Also note that all programs, whether or not they offered any portion of their program online, offered hands-on, face-to-face clinical experiences. Didactic curriculum is defined as including actual hours of classroom instruction in nursing and non-nursing Board-required courses/content.

Program Hours in Vocational Nursing Programs

Programs were asked to report the total number of hours students were required to participate in didactic and clinical portions of the program of study. The clinical portion is the sum of computer lab, skills lab, simulation lab, and patient care clinical situation hours.

Table 3 and Figure 2 report the mean and median number of contact hours (didactic and clinical) reported by VN programs. Clinical hours are further broken down by computer lab, skills lab, simulation lab, and patient care clinical situation hours.

- The didactic contact hours included face-to-face or online delivery of classroom instruction. BON rules require a minimum of 558 didactic hours in VN programs.³ The mean number of didactic hours reported by VN programs was 606.9 hours. The median number of hours was 592.
- The mean number of total clinical contact hours reported by VN programs was 894.8 hours. The median number of contact hours was 870 and the highest number of hours reported was 1,208 hours. BON rules require a minimum of 840 total hours in clinical learning experiences for VN programs.²

Table 3. Didactic and Clinical Contact Hours among Vocational Nursing Programs

		Mean Contact Hours	Median Contact Hours
Didactic	Didactic Total	606.9	592.0
Clinical	Clinical Total	894.8	870.0
	Computer Lab	53.7	44.0
	Skills Lab	173.3	160.0
	Simulation Lab	63.6	52.0
	Patient Care Clinical Situations	634.0	652.0

- Computer lab was an optional component of clinical hours that included interactive tutorials and learning modules. The mean and median hours reported by VN programs for computer lab were 53.7 and 44 hours, respectively. This does not include programs that reported zero hours of computer lab.
- Skills lab was defined as low- and medium- fidelity simulations and task training. All but one school reported skills lab hours in their program of study. The mean and median hours reported for skills lab were 173.3 and 160 hours, respectively.
- Simulation lab was defined as high-fidelity situations including orientation, learning objectives, simulation experience, debriefing, and evaluation. 75 of 92 (81.5%) programs reported simulation hours for their program of study. The mean and median hours reported for simulation lab were 63.6 and 52 hours, respectively.

- Patient care clinical situations included direct care, observational experiences and clinical conferences. The mean and median number of hours reported for patient care clinical situations were 634 and 652 hours, respectively.

Figure 2. Didactic and Clinical Contact Hours among Vocational Nursing Programs

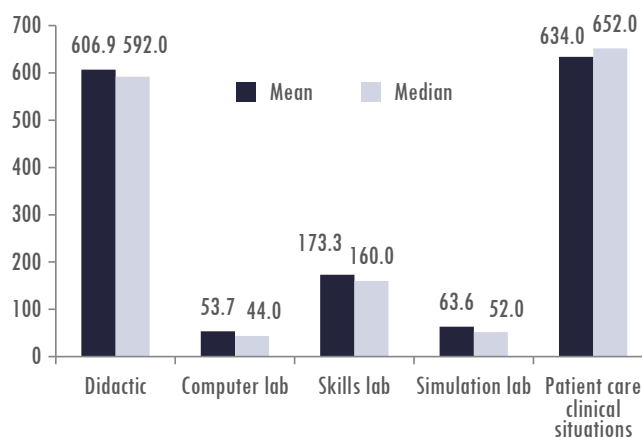


Table 4 shows the percentage of hands-on clinical time programs reported students spent in several different clinical settings.

- The largest percentage of hands-on clinical practice hours were spent in acute care, with programs reporting an average of 46.8% of clinical time spent.
- The next most used setting was long term care, with an average of 30.9% of clinical practice hours.

Table 4. Average Percentage of Hands-On Clinical Time Spent by Setting

Clinical Setting	Average % of Time Spent
Acute Care	46.8%
Community	10.7%
Long Term Care	30.9%
Other	11.6%

³122 Tex. Admin. Code § 214.9. Retrieved from: [http://info.sos.state.tx.us/pls/pub/readtac\\$ext.TacPage?sl=R&capp=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_dloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=22&pt=11&ch=214&rl=9](http://info.sos.state.tx.us/pls/pub/readtac$ext.TacPage?sl=R&capp=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_dloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=22&pt=11&ch=214&rl=9)

Interprofessional Collaboration in Vocational Nursing Programs

Based on the recommendation of the Institute of Medicine's Future of Nursing report,⁴ the 2014 NEPIS includes a question on the amount of interprofessional collaboration VN students experience.

Programs were asked to report the number of required nursing courses that offered clinical or simulation experiences for both VN students and one or more types of other graduate-level health professional students, such as physicians, physician assistants, pharmacists, or other health professional students.

- 40 of 92 programs (43.5%) reported a nursing course requirement offering interprofessional collaboration experience.
- The mean and median number of courses was 4. These programs reported anywhere from 1 course (5 programs) to 9 courses (1 program).

⁴The Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences. (2010). The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health. Retrieved from: <http://www.iom.edu/Reports/2010/The-Future-of-Nursing-Leading-Change-Advancing-Health.aspx>

Military Tracks in Vocational Nursing Programs

Programs were asked to report whether they had implemented a track that gives active duty, former, or retired military personnel nursing credit for allied health care training and/or experience.

- Only 2 programs reported having a military track in place. Neither program reported having any students currently enrolled in that track.
- 11 programs reported plans to implement a military track.

Programs were also asked to explain any challenges they have experienced while either planning for or implementing a military track.

- Of the 11 programs planning to implement a military track, 4 programs mentioned challenges concerning how to give credit for prior experience and 2 programs cited curriculum issues.

- Issues identified by programs that do not currently have plans for a military track included: no interest from military personnel (3 programs), having never considered a military track/needing more information (3 programs), concerns with how to issue credit for experience (3 programs), location issues (1 program) and student loan issues (1 program).
- The 2 programs with military tracks in place did not report any challenges experienced during either planning or implementation.