



Admissions, Enrollment, and Graduation Trends in Vocational Nursing Programs

2016

This update presents data for the 89¹ vocational nursing (VN) programs in Texas during the 2016 reporting year, including:

- 83 generic programs
 - 64 in public colleges/universities
 - 14 in career schools/colleges
 - 2 in private colleges/universities
 - 3 in private/public hospitals
- 5 Multiple Entry/Exit Programs (MEEP)
 - All in public colleges/universities

The Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies (TCNWS) collected data in the 2016 Board of Nursing's (BON) Nursing Education Program Information Survey (NEPIS) that was available online as of October 3, 2016. The reporting period was academic year (AY) 2015-2016 (September 1, 2015 – August 31, 2016) 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 2016.

- Qualified applications were those that met all criteria for admission based on the standards set by individual programs.
 - There were 7,964 qualified applications in 2016, a decrease of 14.4% from 2015.³
 - The number of qualified applications has declined each year since 2011, decreasing 49.1% overall from 2011 to 2016.
 - Of the number of qualified applications, admission was offered to 6,956, or 87.3%.
- The number of qualified applications not offered admission (QANA) decreased from 2015 to 2016 by 37.3%.
- 43 programs accepted all qualified applications, 4 fewer than in 2015.

The 45 programs that did not accept all qualified applications were asked to rank the reasons why qualified applications were not offered admission in order of importance (42 programs responded to this question).

- Lack of clinical space was ranked first or second in importance for not offering admission to all qualified applications by 26 programs (61.9% of 42 responding programs).
 - Programs that ranked lack of clinical space first

Table 1. Qualified Applications, Admissions, and QANA, 2006 - 2016

Year	Enrollment Capacity ^{4,5}	Qualified Applications	Offered Admission	QANA (%)
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%)
2016	7,770	7,964	6,956	1,008 (12.7%)

or second cited reasons such as competition with other nursing programs, preference given to professional nursing students, and lack of clinical availability in certain locations or settings.

- Limited classroom space was ranked first or second in importance for not offering admission to all qualified applications by 17 programs (40.5%).
- Both a lack of qualified faculty applicants and lack of budgeted faculty positions were ranked first or second by 15 programs each (35.7%).

- Other reasons programs cited for not offering qualified applications admission included enrollment capacity limits.

²Qualified applications refer 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 BON rules or logistical concerns (faculty size, classroom space, etc.).

Newly Enrolled Students in Vocational Nursing Programs

Figure 1 and Table 2 show the yearly change in the number of newly enrolled students from 2006 to 2016. Newly enrolled students are those who were offered admission and decided to register and enroll in the program.

- From 2015 to 2016, the number of newly enrolled students decreased by 9.5%, from 6,559 to 5,933.

Figure 1. Newly Enrolled Students, 2006 - 2016

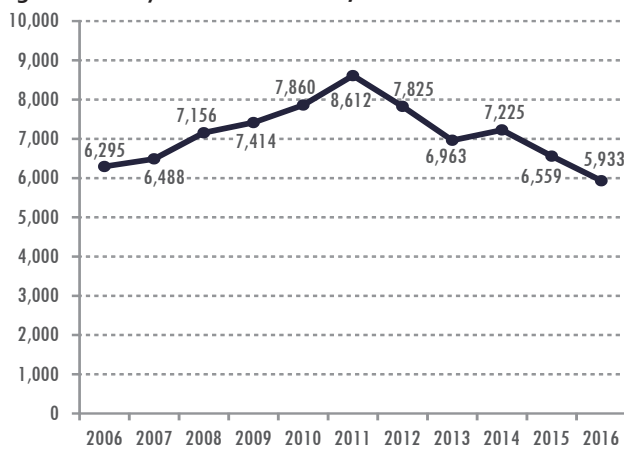


Table 2. Change in Newly Enrolled Students, 2006 - 2016

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%
2016	5,933	-9.5%

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

- The number of newly enrolled students increased each year from 2006 to 2011, but decreased each year from 2011 to 2013 and from 2014 to 2016.
- Since 2006, there was an overall decrease of 5.8% in the number of newly enrolled VN students.

Total Enrollment in Vocational Nursing Programs

Table 3 presents the breakdown of total enrollment by program type and setting for AY 2015-2016.

- 97.9% of enrolled students were in generic programs. There were 165 students enrolled in MEEPs⁶ during AY 2015-2016.
- 56.8% of all enrolled students were enrolled in public colleges or universities.
- 28.0% of students were enrolled in career schools/colleges, even though career schools/colleges represented only 15.9% of all VN programs.

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.

Table 3. VN Program Enrollment by Program Type, AY 2015 - 2016

Program Type	Program Setting	Enrollment	% of Total Enrollment
Generic	Public Colleges/Universities	4273	54.6%
	Career Schools/Colleges	2187	28.0%
	Private Colleges/Universities	960	12.3%
	Hospitals	234	3.0%
MEEP	Public Colleges/Universities	165	2.1%
Total		7819	100.0%

Figure 2 shows the fluctuating trend in total VN enrollment since 2006.

- Total VN student enrollment declined by 10.2% since 2015, continuing a downward trend since 2011.
- However, overall, the total number of students enrolled in VN programs increased by 40.5% between 2006 and 2016.

Figure 2. Total VN Enrollment, 2006 - 2016



Graduates from Vocational Nursing Programs

Figure 3 and Table 4 show the change in the number of VN graduates since 2006.

- The number of graduates has decreased each year since 2011.
- A total of 3,862 students graduated in 2016, a decrease of 15.1% from 2015.
- The number of VN graduates has decreased by 5.4% since 2006.

Figure 3. VN Graduates, 2006 - 2016



VN graduates by program and institution type are shown in Table 5.

- 96.5% of students graduated from generic programs. 137 students (3.5%) graduated from MEEPs.
- 66.3% of total graduates were from public colleges/universities.
- Career schools/colleges graduated the second largest proportion (24.2%) of VN students during the reporting period.
- Private college/university graduates comprised only 6.9% of the total number of graduates.

Table 4. Change in VN Graduates, 2006 - 2016

Year	Graduates	% Annual Change 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%
2016	3,862	-15.1%

Table 5. VN Graduates by Program Type, 2016

Program Type	Program Setting	Graduates	% of Total Graduates
Generic	Public Colleges/Universities	2,422	62.7%
	Career Schools/Colleges	933	24.2%
	Private Colleges/Universities	266	6.9%
	Hospitals	104	2.7%
MEEP	Public Colleges/Universities	137	3.5%
Total		3,862	100%

Barriers to Increasing Graduates

Programs were asked to list barriers that they faced in increasing VN graduates in AY 2015-2016. 67 programs identified having barriers to increasing the number of graduates.⁷ Some of these barriers included:

- Academic failure or challenges (15 programs),
- Lack of qualified applicants (15 programs),
- Financial difficulties/lack of financial aid (9 programs),
- Issues with retention of students (8 programs),
- Poor academic preparedness of students (7 programs),
- Lack of clinical sites (7 programs), and
- Competition with other nursing programs (7 programs).

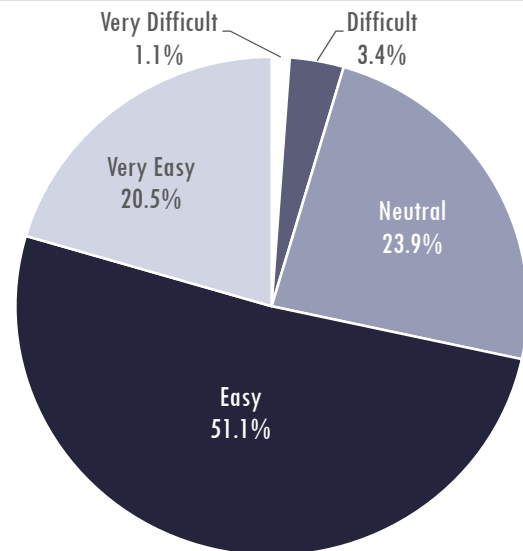
Level of Difficulty for Graduates to Find a Job in Nursing

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

- Over two-thirds of VN programs perceived that it was easy or very easy for their graduates to find jobs (71.6%).

⁷Programs could list more than one barrier to increasing the number of graduates.

Figure 4. Difficulty of VN Graduates in Finding a Job, 2016



- Only 4.5% perceived that it was difficult or very difficult for their graduates to find jobs.
- Programs whose graduates had difficulty finding jobs listed reasons such as employers preferring experienced nurses or registered nurses, limited opportunities for VNs in acute care or hospital settings, and limited availability of jobs with graduates' preferred work schedules.

Military-Based Nursing Program

Table 6 lists data on qualified applications² and admissions to the military-based VN program from 2009 to 2016.

- There were 560 qualified applications in 2016, an increase of 22.5% from 2015.
- As in the previous five years, all qualified applications were offered admission in 2016.

Table 6. Qualified Applications, Admissions, and QANA for Military-Based Program, 2009 - 2016

Year	Enrollment Capacity ^{4,5}	Qualified Applications	Offered Admission	QANA (%)
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%)
2016	561	560	560	0 (0%)

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

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 from 2009 to 2016.

- There were 560 newly enrolled students, which was also the number of total enrolled students for the military-based VN program.
- In 2016, there were 469 graduates. This represented a 33.2% increase in graduates from 2015.

Table 7. Newly Enrolled Students, Total Enrollment, and Graduates for Military-Based Program, 2009 - 2016

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
2016	560	560	469