



Admissions, Enrollment, and Graduation Trends in Vocational Nursing Programs

2017

This update presents data for the 91 vocational nursing (VN) programs and the military-based VN program¹ in Texas during the 2017 reporting year, including:

- 85 generic programs
 - 65 in public colleges/universities
 - 13 in career schools/colleges
 - 4 in private colleges/universities
 - 3 in private/public hospitals
- 5 Multiple Entry/Exit Programs (MEEPs)
 - All in public colleges/universities
- 1 military-based program¹

The Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies (TCNWS) collected data in the 2017 Board of Nursing's (BON) Nursing Education Program Information Survey (NEPIS) that was available online as of October 2, 2017. The reporting period was academic year (AY) 2016-2017 (September 1, 2016 – August 31, 2017) 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 2017.

- Seats for new students^{3,4} increased 5.8% between 2016 and 2017.
- Qualified applications were those that met all criteria for admission based on the standards set by individual programs.
 - There were 8,843 qualified applications in 2017, an increase of 11.0% from 2016.⁵ This represents the first increase in qualified applications since 2011.
 - Of the number of qualified applications, admission was offered to 7,693, or 87.0%.
- The number of qualified applications not offered admission (QANA) increased from 2016 to 2017 by 14.1%.
- 45 programs accepted all qualified applications, 2 more than in 2016.

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 (45 programs responded to this question).

- Lack of clinical space was ranked as the first or second most important reason for not offering admission to all qualified applications by 30 programs (66.7% of 45 responding programs).

Table 1. Qualified Applications, Admissions, and QANA, 2006 - 2017

Year	Seats for New Students ^{3,4,6}	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%)
2017	8,220	8,843	7,693	1,150 (13.0%)

- Programs that ranked lack of clinical space first or second cited reasons such as competition with other nursing programs (7 programs), preference given to professional nursing students (9 programs), and lack of clinical availability in certain locations or settings (3 programs).

- Limited classroom space was ranked first or second in importance for not offering admission to all qualified applications by 26 programs (57.8%).
- Lack of budgeted faculty positions was ranked first or second by 12 programs (26.7%) and lack of qualified faculty applicants was ranked first or second by 7 programs (15.6%).
- Other reasons programs cited for not offering qualified applications admission included students not meeting additional requirements to attend the program (6 programs).

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

³In previous reports seats for new students was reported as enrollment capacity.

⁴Per the survey operational definition, seats for new students refers to the maximum number of seats for new students that a program can enroll in any given admission period. Seats for new students may be limited by Board of Nursing rules or logistical concerns (faculty size, classroom space, etc.)

⁵Candidates for admission may apply and be accepted by more than one nursing program; therefore, these data may represent some duplicated counts of individuals.

⁶The number of students offered admission may exceed seats for new students in order to account for students who apply to multiple programs. Data were not available for cells with dashes (-).

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 2017. Newly enrolled students are those who were offered admission and decided to register and enroll in the program.

- From 2016 to 2017, the number of newly enrolled students increased by 9.0%, from 5,933 to 6,468, which represents the first increase since 2014.

- 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 increase of 2.7% in the number of newly enrolled VN students.

Figure 1. Newly Enrolled Students, 2006 - 2017

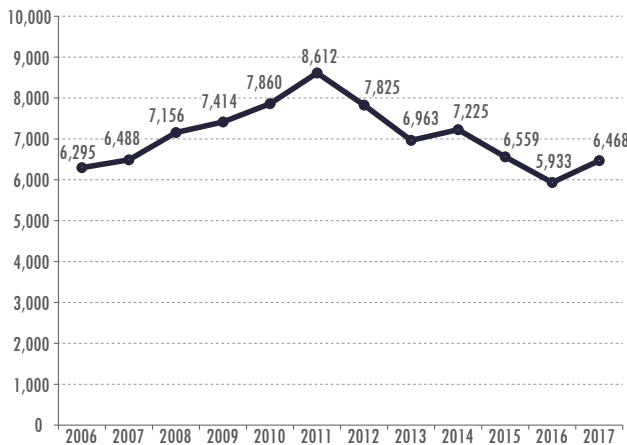


Table 2. Change in Newly Enrolled Students, 2006 - 2017

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%
2017	6,468	9.0%

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

Total Enrollment in Vocational Nursing Programs

Table 3 (page 3) presents the breakdown of total enrollment by program type and setting for AY 2016-2017.

- 97.8% of enrolled students were in generic programs. There were 185 students enrolled in MEEPs⁷ during AY 2016-2017.
- 55.5% of all enrolled students were enrolled in public colleges or universities.

- 21.8% of students were enrolled in career schools/colleges, even though career schools/colleges represented only 14.4% of VN programs.⁸

⁷Multiple 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.

⁸The army program was not included in this analysis.

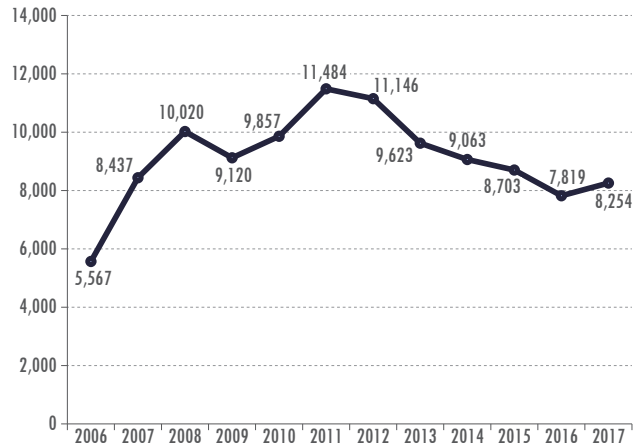
Table 3. VN Program Enrollment by Program Type, AY 2016 - 2017

Program Type	Program Setting	Enrollment	% of Total Enrollment
Generic	Public Colleges/ Universities	4,398	53.3%
	Career Schools/ Colleges	1,798	21.8%
	Private Colleges/ Universities	1,640	19.9%
	Hospitals	233	2.8%
MEEP	Public Colleges/ Universities	185	2.2%
Total		8,254	100.0%

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

- Total VN student enrollment increased by 5.6% since 2016, which represents the first increase since 2011.
- The total number of students enrolled in VN programs increased by 48.3% between 2006 and 2017.

Figure 2. Total VN Enrollment, 2006 - 2017



Graduates from Vocational Nursing Programs

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

- 2017 represents the first increase in the number of graduates since 2011.
- A total of 4,102 students graduated in 2017, a increase of 6.2% from 2016.
- The number of VN graduates has increased by 0.5% since 2006.

Figure 3. VN Graduates, 2006 - 2017

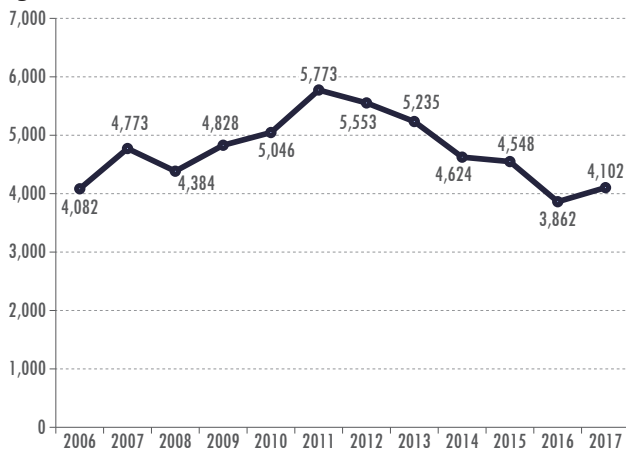


Table 4. Change in VN Graduates, 2006 - 2017

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%
2017	4,102	6.2%



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

- 96.3% of students graduated from generic programs. 153 students (3.7%) graduated from MEEPs.
- 60.7% of total graduates were from public colleges/universities.
- Career schools/colleges graduated the second largest proportion (21.1%) of VN students during the reporting period.
- Private college/university graduates comprised 15.5% of the total number of graduates.

Barriers to Increasing Graduates

Programs were asked to list barriers that they faced in increasing VN graduates in AY 2016-2017. 62 programs identified having barriers to increasing the number of graduates.⁹ Some of these barriers included:

- Academic failure or challenges (14 programs),
- Poor academic preparedness of students (14 programs),
- Lack of qualified applicants (10 programs),
- Shortage of qualified faculty (8 programs)
- Issues with retention of students (7 programs), and
- Lack of clinical sites (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.

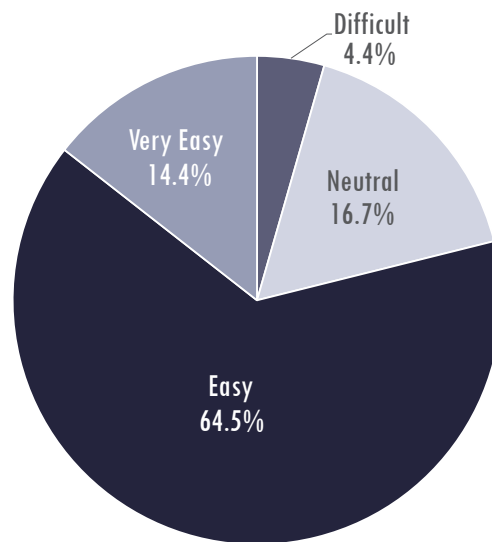
- Over two-thirds of VN programs perceived that it was easy or very easy for their graduates to find jobs (78.9%).
- Only 4.4% perceived that it was difficult for their graduates to find jobs. None of the VN programs selected that it was very difficult for their graduates to find jobs.
- Programs whose graduates had difficulty finding jobs listed reasons such as employers preferring experienced nurses or registered nurses (2 programs) and limited opportunities for VNs in acute care or hospital settings (1 program).

⁹Programs could list more than one barrier to increasing the number of graduates.

Table 5. VN Graduates by Program Type, 2017

Program Type	Program Setting	Graduates	% of Total Graduates
Generic	Public Colleges/ Universities	2,337	57.0%
	Career Schools/ Colleges	867	21.1%
	Private Colleges/ Universities	635	15.5%
	Hospitals	110	2.7%
MEEP	Public Colleges/ Universities	153	3.7%
Total		4,102	100%

Figure 4. Difficulty of VN Graduates in Finding a Job, 2017



Military-Based Nursing Program

Table 6 lists data on qualified applications² and admissions to the military-based VN program from 2009 to 2017.

- There were 566 qualified applications in 2017, an increase of 1.1% from 2016.
- All qualified applications were offered admission in 2017.

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 2017.

- There were 566 newly enrolled students, which was also the number of total enrolled students for the military-based VN program.
- In 2017, there were 375 graduates. This represented a 20.0% decrease in graduates from 2016.

Table 6. Qualified Applications, Admissions, and QANA for Military-Based Program, 2009 - 2017

Year	Seats for New Students ^{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%)
2017	631	566	566	0 (0%)

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

Table 7. Newly Enrolled Students, Total Enrollment, and Graduates for Military-Based Program, 2009 - 2017

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
2017	566	566	375