

NLN Faculty Census Survey of Schools of Nursing 2016-2017

Executive Summary

Policy-makers, planners, governmental agencies, regulators, and others use National League for Nursing (NLN) workforce data as they design legislation, approve budgets, and formulate long-range educational goals. The 2017 NLN Faculty Census Survey of Schools of Nursing was conducted to provide such data. The data presented in this report were provided by 55 percent of 1,195 NLN member schools invited to complete the survey (n = 661). Following are highlights of the findings with data compared to the 2015 Faculty Census Survey. (Details are available online at <http://www.nln.org/newsroom/nursing-education-statistics>.)

DEMOGRAPHICS AND TENURE

The proportion of minority nurse educators remained unchanged compared to 2015. Of full-time nurse educators, only 16.2 percent were members of minority groups: African American, 8.8 percent (increase of only 0.4 percent from 2015); Hispanic, 3.7 percent; Asian, 2.7 percent; American Indian, 0.4 percent. Only 0.6 percent described themselves as multiracial.

Male representation in nursing education also remained unchanged in 2017 compared to 2015. Of full-time faculty, only 6 percent were male. Among part-time faculty, the percentage of male faculty increased from 8 percent in 2015 to 9 percent in 2017.

Most full-time nurse educators continue to be over the age of 45 (69.6 percent); 47.6 percent are aged 46 to 60, and 22 percent are 61 or older. The percentage of full-time faculty under 30 is small at 1.9 percent — an increase from 1.6 percent in 2015. Less than one third are 30 to 45 years old (28.5 percent).

Of 13,513 full-time faculty across all ranks, only 19 percent were tenured — a decrease of 3 percent compared to 2015; 15 percent were on a tenure track but not tenured — a decrease of 1 percent. The majority of faculty (66 percent) were not on a tenure track.

FACULTY VACANCIES AND SALARIES

The total number of faculty vacancies for the nursing programs that responded to the survey decreased from 1,072 in 2015 to 839 in 2017. The 2017 survey asked deans and directors to indicate if their nursing program sought to hire new faculty; 85 percent of 631 respondents indicated that they sought to hire new faculty. However, 514 nursing schools continued to experience difficulty in recruiting and hiring. The reasons given were as follows: not enough qualified faculty (38 percent), not able to offer competitive salaries (34 percent), faculty jobs less attractive than others (9 percent), not enough budget lines available (7 percent), and other difficulties (12 percent).

Salaries are presented according to Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education <http://carnegieclassifications.iu.edu/>. Doctoral/research education institutions paid nurse educators the highest average full-time salary, followed by master's institutions and baccalaureate institutions. Colleges offering the associate degree in nursing paid, on average, the lowest salaries for full-time faculty of educator rank (see Figure 1).

SUMMARY

The survey results affirm that a faculty shortage continues to exist for several reasons: there are budgeted unfilled positions in most nursing schools with a lack of qualified candidates to be hired as nurse educators. The survey also indicates that ethnic racial minority nurse educators, as well as gender diversity, continue to be underrepresented in nursing schools. It is important to encourage men and ethnic racial minorities to become nurse educators to promote diversity in nursing education. The survey results also affirm that many nurse educators are older, and there is a continuing need to increase the pool of educators to meet the demand. Continued support for legislation for the Title VIII funding is critical to address the faculty shortage in nursing programs.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The NLN is grateful to the schools of nursing that contribute their time and effort each year to make these invaluable data available.

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Figure 1:
SALARIES OF FULL-TIME NURSE EDUCATORS BY RANK AND CARNEGIE CLASSIFICATION, 2017
(9-month appointment).

