

NLN Faculty Census Survey of Schools of Nursing Academic Year 2018-2019

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 2019 NLN Faculty Census Survey of Schools of Nursing was conducted to provide such data. The data presented in this report were provided by 43 percent of 1,018 NLN member schools invited to complete the survey (n = 435). Following are highlights of the findings with data compared to the 2017 Faculty Census Survey. (Details are available online at <http://www.nln.org/newsroom/nursing-education-statistics>.)

DEMOGRAPHICS AND TENURE

The proportion of underrepresented nurse educators increased slightly (by 0.4 percent) compared to 2017. Of full-time nurse educators, only 16.6 percent were members of underrepresented populations: African American, 9.0 percent (increase of only 0.3 percent from 2017); Hispanic, 3.4 percent; Asian, 2.9 percent; American Indian, 0.4 percent. Only 0.8 percent described themselves as multiracial.

Male representation in nursing education also increased slightly, by 1 percent compared to 2017. Of full-time faculty, only 7 percent were male. Among part-time faculty, the percentage of male faculty increased from 9 percent in 2017 to 9.2 percent in 2019.

Most full-time nurse educators continue to be over the age of 45 (70 percent); 50.2 percent are 46 to 60 years of age, and 19.8 percent are age 61 or older. The percentage of full-time faculty under 30 is small at 1.6 percent — a decrease from 1.9 percent in 2017. Less than one third are 30 to 45 years old (28.4 percent).

Of 10,568 full-time faculty across all ranks, only 17 percent were tenured — a decrease of 2 percent compared to 2017; 14 percent were on a tenure track but not tenured — a decrease of 1 percent. The majority of faculty (69 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 839

in 2017 to 669 in 2019. The 2019 survey asked deans and directors to indicate if their nursing program sought to hire new faculty. Eighty-two percent of 435 respondents indicated that they sought to hire new faculty; 357 nursing schools continued to experience difficulty in recruiting and hiring. The reasons given were as follows: not enough qualified faculty (34 percent), not able to offer competitive salaries (37 percent), faculty jobs less attractive than others (12 percent), not enough budget lines available (6 percent), and other difficulties (11 percent).

Salaries are presented according to the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education (<http://carnegieclassifications.iu.edu/>). Doctoral/research education institutions paid nurse educators the highest average full-time salaries, 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.

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 shortage of qualified candidates. The current demand for qualified nurses to assist the overwhelming number of COVID-19 patients in various hospitals supports the need to educate more faculty to teach in nursing schools and thereby increase the number of students educated as nurses.

The survey also indicates that underrepresented populations of nurse educators, as well as gender diversity, have barely changed, with lack of diversity an ongoing issue in nursing education. It is important to encourage men and underrepresented populations to become nurse educators. The survey results also validate that many nurse educators are older, leading to a continuing need to increase the pool of educators to meet increasing demands. Continued support for legislation for 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.