



This update presents data for the 91¹ vocational nursing (VN) programs in Texas during the 2015 reporting year, including:

- 86 generic programs
 - 65 in public colleges/universities
 - 17 in career schools/colleges
 - 1 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 2015 Board of Nursing's (BON) Nursing Education Program Information Survey (NEPIS) that was available online as of October 1, 2015. The reporting period was academic year (AY) 2014-2015 (September 1, 2014 – August 31, 2015) 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 91 vocational nursing program main campuses in Texas by metropolitan and non-metropolitan counties.

- The majority (57.1%) of programs were located in a metropolitan non-border area.
- 30.8% of VN programs were located in a non-metropolitan, non-border area.
- 8 (8.8%) programs were located in a metropolitan border area.
- 3 (3.3%) VN programs were located in a non-metropolitan border area.

Figure 1. Geographic Location of VN Programs, Main Campuses

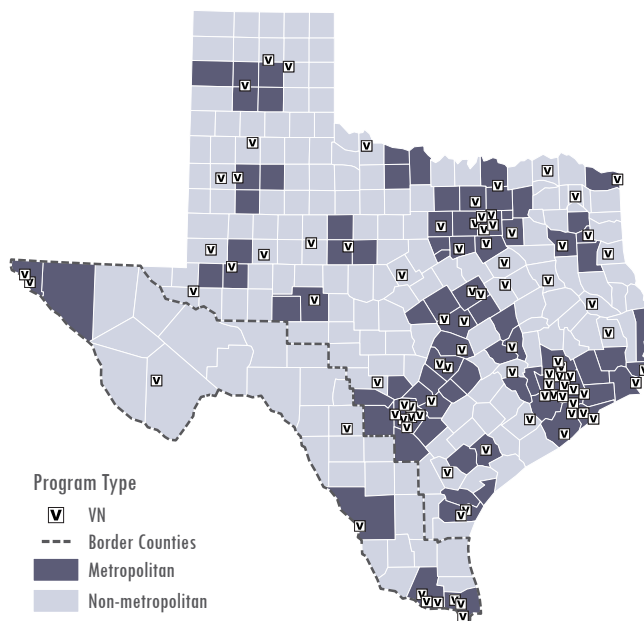


Table 1. Geographic Designation of Main Campuses

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	0	0	0	1	1
Public/Private Hospital	1	0	0	2	3
Career Schools/Colleges	2	15	0	0	17
Total	8	52	3	28	91

Changes in the Number of Vocational Nursing Programs

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

- In 2015, there were 91 VN programs. There was 1 new program, and 2 closures between 2014 and 2015.

²Between 2006 and 2008, many programs consolidated/merged their extension sites with main campuses, leading to a decrease in total number of programs.

Table 2. Number of Opened, Closed, and Total VN Programs, 2006-2015

	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
2015	1	2	91

Governing Institutions

The 91 vocational nursing programs were governed by different types of institutions. These were mutually exclusive categories.

- 4 programs were governed by private/non-profit institutions.

- 17 programs were governed by private/for-profit institutions.
- 70 programs were governed by public institutions.

Length of Curriculum in Vocational Nursing Programs

In the 2015 NEPIS, programs were asked to report the length of their vocational nursing curriculum in months.

- Program length ranged from 9 to 18 months among vocational nursing programs.

- 78 (85.7%) vocational nursing programs were 12 months in length.
- 8 programs (8.8%) had a program length longer than 12 months and 5 programs (5.5%) reported less than 12 months in program length.

Online Availability of Vocational Nursing Programs³

35 of 91 vocational nursing education programs indicated that they offered nursing courses via online technology:

- Similar to 2014, 1 program offered the entire didactic portion online in 2015.
- 19 programs offered only select nursing courses entirely online, which is one more program than in 2014.

- 26 programs offered select nursing courses as blended/hybrid courses. This is a decrease from 30 programs that offered select nursing courses as blended/hybrid courses in 2014.

³Please 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.

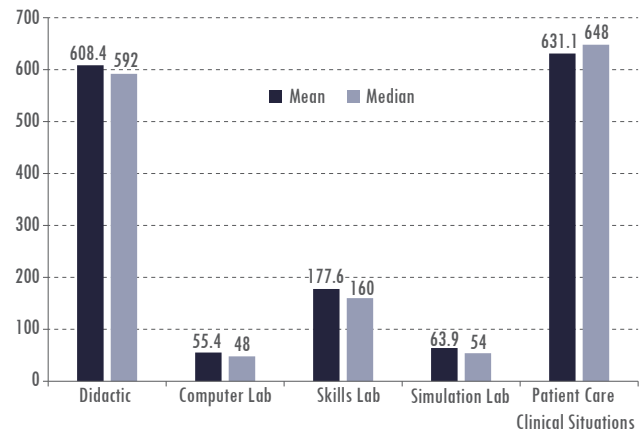
- The didactic contact hours included face-to-face or online delivery of classroom instruction. BON rules require a minimum of 558 didactic hours in VN programs.⁴ The mean number of didactic hours reported by VN programs was 608.4 hours. The median number of hours was 592.
- The mean number of total clinical contact hours reported by VN programs was 901.9 hours. The median number of contact hours was 870 and the highest number of hours reported was 1,552 hours. BON rules require a minimum of 840 total hours in clinical learning experiences for VN programs.⁴

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

		Mean Contact Hours	Median Contact Hours
Didactic	Didactic Total	608.4	592.0
	Clinical Total	901.9	870.0
Clinical	Computer Lab	55.4	48.0
	Skills Lab	177.6	160.0
	Simulation Lab	63.9	54.0
	Patient Care Clinical Situations	631.1	648.0

- 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 55.4 and 48 hours, respectively. This does not include programs that reported zero hours of computer lab (21 programs).
- Skills lab was defined as low- and medium- fidelity simulations and task training. All VN programs reported skills lab hours in their program of study. The mean and median hours reported for skills lab were 177.6 and 160 hours, respectively.
- Simulation lab was defined as high-fidelity situations including orientation, learning objectives, simulation experience, debriefing, and evaluation. 72 of 91 (79.1%) programs reported simulation hours for their program of study. The mean and median hours reported for simulation lab were 63.9 and 54 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 631.1 and 648 hours, respectively.

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



The 2015 NEPIS asked programs to indicate whether they used Dedicated Education Units (DEUs)⁵ as a clinical format and only 4 programs stated they used DEUs.

Programs were also asked to provide additional information on their simulation lab hours. As seen in Table 4:

- 38 programs (41.8%) reported planning to increase simulation lab hours over the next academic year.
- 77 programs (84.6%) indicated that simulation lab hours are not weighted differently than hands-on clinical hours.

Table 4. VN Programs and Simulation Hours

	n	Yes	No
Increase Simulation Lab Hours	91	38 (41.8%)	53 (58.2%)
Simulation Lab Hours Weighted Differently	91	14 (15.4%)	77 (84.6%)

n = number of responding agencies

Programs were also asked to report the faculty to student ratio in simulation activities.

- The ratios reported ranged from 1 faculty member for every 3 students (2 programs) to 1 faculty member for every 30 students (1 program).
- The most frequently reported ratio was 1 faculty member for every 10 students (49 programs).
- 1 faculty member for every 5 students was the second most frequently reported faculty to student ratio (9 programs).

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

⁵A Dedicated Education Unit is a nursing education model based upon a contractual agreement between a hospital and a nursing education program. Staff nurses on a specific hospital unit function as the primary instructors for nursing students during clinical learning experiences, and nursing program faculty serve as mentors and education resources for the staff nurses.



Table 5 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 46.9% of clinical time spent.
- The next most used setting was long term care, with an average of 31.1% of clinical practice hours.

Table 5. Average Percentage of Hands-On Clinical Time Spent by Setting

Clinical Setting	Average % of Time Spent
Acute Care	46.9%
Community	11.5%
Long Term Care	31.1%
Other	10.5%

Interprofessional Collaboration in Vocational Nursing Programs

Based on the recommendation of the Institute of Medicine’s Future of Nursing report,⁶ the 2015 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.

- 29 of 91 programs (31.9%) reported a nursing course requirement offering interprofessional collaboration experience.
- These programs reported anywhere from 1 course (5 programs) to 14 courses (1 program).

⁶The 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>

High School and Military Tracks in Vocational Nursing Programs

The 2015 VN NEPIS asked programs to indicate whether or not their program offered options for high school students.

- 17 programs reported they did offer options for high school students.

Programs who offered options for high school students were asked to describe them.

- 10 programs offered dual credit courses⁷ and/or the option to take nursing courses.

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.

- In 2015, zero programs reported having a military track.
- 9 programs reported having 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 9 programs planning to implement a military track, 2 programs mentioned challenges concerning how to give credit for prior experience. Other issues cited included curriculum concerns and lack of faculty. 1 program was awaiting more information from financial aid.
- Issues identified by programs that do not currently have plans for a military track included: no interest from military personnel (2 programs), having never considered a military track/need more information (2 programs), lack of personnel to implement military track (2 programs), lack of consistency with field experience (2 programs), and location issues (1 program).

⁷Programs offered dual credit courses for prerequisites, nursing courses, or a combination of both nursing and prerequisites courses.