National Nursing Workforce Minimum Datasets: Education
Updated December 2020

Introduction

The National Forum of State Nursing Workforce Center's *Nursing Education Program Data Collection Tool* serves as a guide for state, national, or international researchers to collect nursing education program data. Using the same definitions and variables presented in this document will increase consistency and promote comparability of data

In 2009 the National Forum of State Nursing Workforce Centers gathered Nursing Education Program Survey instruments from Forum member and non-member states. A National Forum's Research team analyzed the instruments and compiled all items collected by various states and groups. A survey was then conducted to determine the importance of each item collected for 1) forecasting and 2) policy issues. Survey responses were compiled, and scientific literature was reviewed to determine the most critical items to include on nursing education programs and appropriate measurements for each type of variable to promote consistency.

A comprehensive review was conducted in by the National Forum of State Nursing Workforce Centers' Research Committee. Substantive changes to variables or definitions are highlighted in yellow in the document.

Instructions for Collecting the Nursing Education Minimum Dataset

- Jurisdiction/state level data should be collected on an annual basis from every nursing program/institution.
- Data should be collected separately on each type of nursing program offered:
    - Pre-licensure Programs
        - Practical/vocational nurse (PN/VN),
        - Diploma registered nurse (RN),
        - Associate Degree, Generic
        - Associate Degree, Bridge
        - Baccalaureate Degree Program, Generic
        - Baccalaureate Degree Program, 2nd Degree
        - Master's Program

    - Post-licensure Programs
        - Post-licensure LPN to BSN
        - Post-licensure RN to BSN
        - Master's in Nursing – APRN Tracks
        - Master's in Nursing – Non-APRN Tracks
        - PhD Program
        - DNP Program
        - Other Doctoral Programs
- Institutional faculty data may be collected together. Faculty members often teach across multiple programs therefore combining faculty counts may decrease duplication.

Survey Reporting Time Frame: Select a desired "reporting period" to increase consistency of data reported. Select a reporting period that best suits the nursing programs being surveyed; a popular option used is the *Fall Term Census Date;* example, *"*Please respond to questions for the reporting period October 1, 2017 to September 30, 2018." The reporting period selected does not need to have been completed when the survey is fielded. For example, a survey fielded in November 2018 may use a fall term census date of October 15, 2018.

Program and Student Variables

Variable Group 1: Accreditation
Stem (example): By what agencies is your nursing program accredited and/or approved?
Select all that apply.
Response Categories:
Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE)
Accreditation Commission for Educating in Nursing (ACEN)
State Board of Nursing
Other Accrediting Body (identify in comment field)

Variable Group 2: Seats for New Students
Time Frame: Most recently completed 12-month Reporting Period
Stem: Enter the count of seats for new students for the (refer to options listed below) program offered at your institution during this reporting period.
Applicable Definition: *Seats for New Students:* A count of the total number of seats available for newly admitted students during the reporting period.
Response Categories: open-ended numeric fields

Variable Group 3: Qualified Applications
Time Frame: Most recently completed 12-month Reporting Period
Stem (example): Enter the total number of qualified applications for each program type during this reporting period.
Applicable Definition: *Qualified Applicants*: A count of the applications received that were complete, on time, and met all institutional requirements for formal admission to the nursing program during the reporting period.
Response Categories: open-ended numeric fields

Variable Group 4: Accepted Applicants
Time Frame: Most recently completed 12-month Reporting Period
Stem (example): Enter the total number of accepted applicants for each program type during this reporting period.
Applicable Definition: *Accepted Applicants*: A count of the individuals who received official notice from the program that they were invited to begin the nursing program during the reporting period.
Response Categories: open-ended numeric fields

Variable Group 5: New Enrollees
Time Frame: Most recently completed 12-month Reporting Period
Stem (example): Enter the total number of new enrollees for each program type during this reporting period.
Applicable Definition: *New Enrollees*: A count of admitted applicants who subsequently enrolled for the first time in the nursing program during the reporting period. This number should include only individuals who were still enrolled in a nursing course after the first two weeks of class.
Response Categories: open-ended numeric fields

Variable Group 6: Total Student Enrollment
Time Frame: As of the fall term census date as defined by your institution
Stem (example): Enter the total number of students enrolled for each program type during this reporting period.
Applicable Definition: *Total Student Enrollment*: A count of the number of students enrolled during this reporting period. Include students at all points of the program's curriculum sequence, including newly enrolled, continuing, and students in their final semester or year.
Response Categories: open-ended numeric fields

Variable Group 7: Graduates
Time Frame: Most recently completed 12-month Reporting Period
Stem (example): Enter the number of graduates for each program type during this reporting period.
Applicable Definition: *Graduates:* A count of the number of students who successfully completed the program requirements and were formally awarded the degree during the reporting period.
Response Categories: open-ended numeric fields

Variable Group 8: Student Sex/Gender
Time Frame: Most recently completed 12-month reporting period
Stem (example): Enter the count of all students that graduated during the reporting period by sex/gender category for each program type on this survey. The sum of all counts for a program must equal your total number of graduates for that program.
Response Categories: open-ended numeric fields for categories *female*, *male*, *other*, and *missing/unknown*

Variable Group 9: Student Race/Ethnicity
Time Frame: Most recently completed 12-month reporting period
Stem (example): Enter the count of all students that graduated during the reporting period by race category for each program type on this survey. The sum of all counts for a program must equal your total number of graduates for that program.
Response Categories: open-ended numeric fields for *American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, White/Caucasian, Other, Two or more races, Missing/Unknown*

Variable Group 10: Student Age[1]
Time Frame: Most recently completed 12-month reporting period
Stem (example): Enter the count of all students that graduated during the reporting period by age category for each program type on this survey. The sum of all counts for a program must equal your total number of graduates for that program.
Response Categories: open-ended numeric fields for *20 and younger*, *21-25, 26-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, 61 and older*, and *Missing/Unknown*

Faculty Variables

Institutional faculty data may be collected together. Faculty members often teach across multiple programs therefore combining faculty counts may decrease duplication.

Variable Group 12: Faculty Counts

Time Frame: (Insert reporting period selected.)
Stem (example): Enter the count of full-time and part-time faculty members employed by the nursing program(s) represented on this survey during this reporting period.
Applicable Definitions:
Full-time Faculty: Those members of the instructional, administrative, or research staff of the nursing academic unit who are employed full- time as defined by the institution, hold academic rank, carry the full scope of faculty responsibility (e.g., teaching, advisement, committee work), and receive the rights and privileges associated with full time employment. These faculty may be tenured, tenure-track, or non- tenure track (given that there is a tenure system in the institution).*(source)
Part-Time Faculty: Those members of the instructional, administrative, or research staff of the nursing academic unit who are employed part-time as defined by the institution, may or may not hold academic rank, carry responsibility for a specific area (e.g., teaching a single course), and may carry any number of titles (e.g., adjunct, clinical instructor). These faculty members are typically not eligible for tenure.*
Faculty Types: Full-time, Part-time
Response Categories: open-ended numeric fields

Variable Group 13: Faculty Vacancies

Time Frame: (Insert reporting period selected).
Stem (example): Enter the count of full-time and part-time faculty positions that were vacant and being actively recruited during this reporting period.
Applicable Definitions:
Full-time Faculty: Those members of the instructional, administrative, or research staff of the nursing academic unit who are employed full- time as defined by the institution, hold academic rank, carry the full scope of faculty responsibility (e.g., teaching, advisement, committee work), and receive the rights and privileges associated with full time employment. These faculty may be tenured, tenure-track, or non- tenure track (given that there is a tenure system in the institution).*(source)
Part-Time Faculty: Those members of the instructional, administrative, or research staff of the nursing academic unit who are employed part-time as defined by the institution, may or may not hold academic rank, carry responsibility for a specific area (e.g., teaching a single course), and may carry any number of titles (e.g., adjunct, clinical instructor). These faculty members are typically not eligible for tenure.*
Faculty Types: Full-time, Part-time
Response Categories: open-ended numeric fields

Variable Group 14: Highest Degree Held by Faculty
Time Frame: (Insert reporting period selected.)
Faculty Types: Full-time, Part-time
Stem (example): Enter the count of faculty employed during this reporting period by highest level of education. The sum of counts for each faculty type must match the total count for that faculty type. In the event that a faculty member has two degrees at the same level (e.g., a Baccalaureate in Nursing and a Baccalaureate in Business), count that faculty member under the nursing degree.

- Practical/Vocational Nursing Certificate,
- Associate Degree in Nursing/Nursing Diploma,
- Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing,
- Non-nursing Baccalaureate Degree,
- Masters Degree in Nursing,
- Non-nursing Masters Degree,
- PhD in Nursing,
- Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP),
- Other Doctorate in Nursing,
- Non-nursing doctorate,
- Missing/Unknown

Response Categories: open-ended numeric fields

Variable Group 15: Faculty Sex/Gender
Time Frame: (Insert reporting period selected.)
Stem (example): Enter the count of faculty by sex/gender for this reporting period. The sum of counts for each faculty type must match the total count for that faculty type.
Faculty Types: Full-time, Part-time
Response Categories: open-ended numeric fields for *female*, *male*, *other*, and *missing/unknown*

Variable Group 16: Faculty Race/Ethnicity
Time Frame: (Insert reporting period selected.)
Stem (example): Enter the count of faculty by race for this reporting period. The sum of counts for each faculty type must match the total count for that faculty type.
Faculty Types: Full-time, Part-time
Response Categories: open-ended numeric fields for *American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, White/Caucasian, Other, Two or more races, Missing/Unknown*

Variable Group 17: Faculty Age[2]
Time Frame: (Insert reporting period selected.)
Stem (example): Enter the count of faculty by age category for this reporting period. The sum of counts for each faculty type must match the total count for that faculty type.
Faculty Types: Full-time, Part-time
Response Categories: open-ended numeric fields for *20 or younger, 21-25. 26-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, 61-65, 66-70, 71 and older, and Missing/Unknown*

Accepted Applicants: A count of the individuals who *received official notice from the program that they were invited to begin the nursing program* during the Reporting Period.

ADN/ASN Program, Generic: A program of instruction that requires at least two years of full-time equivalent college academic work generally within a junior or community college, the completion of which results in an associate degree with a major in nursing and eligibility to apply for licensure as an RN. This may also be called a "traditional" curriculum sequence.*

ADN/ASN Program, Bridge: A pre-licensure RN associate degree program with a curriculum sequence for students having *some* formal training in nursing or a related field. Bridge programs typically accelerate the degree completion for students who are licensed as an LPN or paramedic, for example. Completion results in an associate degree with a major in nursing and eligibility to apply for licensure as an RN.

Diploma Program: A program of instruction that requires two to three years of full-time equivalent coursework, usually within a hospital-based structural unit, the completion of which results in a diploma or certificate of completion and eligibility to apply for licensure as an RN.*

DNP Program: A program of instruction that prepares graduates for the highest level of nursing practice beyond the initial preparation in the discipline. The doctor of nursing practice degree is the terminal practice degree.*

Fall Term Census Date: Point-in-time questions about faculty and total student enrollment, will use this date. Because these items are not related to a school's production cycle and require a point-in-time count, it is easier for respondents and more relevant for stakeholders if a very recent date is used. It will not be within the reporting period used for production cycle questions. States may select a date within the *most recently started* Fall Term that best suits the structure of their nursing programs. Popular examples include October 1st, October 15th, and the school-specific Fall Term census date at each institution. *The term need not have been completed when the survey is fielded*. For example, a survey fielded in November 2020 may use a fall term census date of October 15, 2020.

Faculty Vacancy: A vacant position for a faculty member that is being actively recruited as of the fall semester census date.

Full-time Faculty: Those members of the instructional, administrative, or research staff of the nursing academic unit who are employed full-time as defined by the institution, hold academic rank, carry the full scope of faculty responsibility (e.g., teaching, advisement, committee work), and receive the rights and privileges associated with full time employment. These faculty may be tenured, tenure-track, or non-tenure track (given that there is a tenure system in the institution).*

Graduates: A count of the number of students who *successfully completed the program requirements* and were *formally awarded the degree* during the Reporting Period.

PN/VN Program: A program of instruction that requires at least one year of full-time equivalent coursework generally within a high school, vocational/technical school or community/junior college setting, the completion of which results in a diploma or certificate of completion and eligibility to apply for licensure as an LPN/VN. Please combine *all curriculum options or tracks* for your pre-licensure LPN program. For example, if your state collects separate data on *advanced placement CNA-to-LPN program tracks*, please combine it with data on generic or traditional LPN program tracks.*

MSN Program – APRN Track: A post-licensure master's program with emphasis on advanced clinical practice, including Nurse Practitioner, Nurse Anesthetist, Nurse Midwifery, and Clinical Nurse Specialist tracks. If your state collects separate data on different clinical tracks, please combine them.

MSN Program – Non-APRN Track: A post-licensure master's program with non-clinical emphasis, such as Nurse Educator and Management/Leadership tracks. If your state collects separate data on different non-clinical tracks, please combine them.

New Enrollees: A count of the Accepted Applicants who subsequently enrolled for the first time in the nursing program during the Reporting Period. This count should include only individuals who were still enrolled in a nursing course after the first two weeks of class.

Other doctoral program: Please combine information for any post-licensure doctoral programs conferring degrees other than the PhD or the DNP.

Part-Time Faculty: Those members of the instructional, administrative, or research staff of the nursing academic unit who are employed part-time as defined by the institution, may or may not hold academic rank, carry responsibility for a specific area (e.g., teaching a single course), and may carry any number of titles (e.g., adjunct, clinical instructor). These faculty members are typically not eligible for tenure.*

PhD Program: A post-licensure doctoral program that culminates in the Doctorate of Philosophy in Nursing.

Post-licensure BSN Program (RN-BSN Program): A program for students who are already licensed as RNs but whose highest nursing degree is a diploma or associate's degree. *Do not* include unlicensed students in these counts.

Pre-licensure BSN Program, Generic: A program of instruction to prepare registered nurses that admits students with no previous nursing education, the completion of which results in a baccalaureate degree (e.g., BA, BS, BSN, etc.) with a major in nursing and eligibility to apply for licensure as an RN. The program requires at least four years but not more than five years of full-time equivalent college academic work within in a senior college or university.*

Pre-licensure BSN Program, Second Degree: A program of instruction to prepare registered nurses that admits students with baccalaureate degrees in other disciplines and no previous nursing education and, at completion, awards a baccalaureate degree in nursing and eligibility to apply for licensure as an RN. The curriculum is designed to be completed in less time than the generic (entry-level) baccalaureate program usually through a combination of "bridge"/transition courses.*

Pre-licensure MSN Program (Entry MSN): A program of instruction that admits students with baccalaureate degrees in other disciplines and no previous nursing education. The program prepares graduates for entry into the profession, eligibility to apply for licensure as an RN, and upon completion awards a master's degree (e.g., MSN, MS, MA, etc.) in nursing. *Do not* include licensed students in these counts.*

Qualified Applications: A count of the complete applications submitted on time and that *met all institutional requirements* for formal admission to the nursing program during the Reporting Period.

Reporting Period: The most recently completed state-defined twelve-month reporting period. Questions about the production cycle of a nursing program, such as the number of qualified applicants or graduates, will use this one-year time frame. States may use a reporting period that best suits their needs. Many currently use the Academic Year, defined as Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters.

Seats for New Students: A count of the total number of seats available for *newly admitted students* during the Reporting Period. If your program does not have a formal limit on seats for new students, please indicate "Unlimited."

Total student enrollment: A count of the number of students enrolled on the fall semester census date. Include students *at all points of the program's curriculum sequence*, including newly enrolled, continuing, and students in their final semester or year.

* Source: Interagency Collaborative on Nursing Statistics (ICONS) – some items adapted to facilitate proper data collection: http://www.iconsdata.org/educationrelated.htm