

The State of The State's Nursing Education Programs 2022 Survey Results

The data book for the State of the State's Nursing Education Programs 2022 Survey is now available. Below is a brief executive summary of critical points from the survey. Please use this and the previous survey (2020) for any research purposes that ask for data on the Maine faculty workforce. I have posted alongside this the AACN Fact Sheet on the Nursing Faculty Shortage so you may compare how we are doing in relation to our peers across the country. This is a complete data set with responses from every one of our 15 Maine nursing programs. I appreciate the time each of the programs took in completing this survey.

Executive Summary

Maine has 15 nursing schools:

- 8 offer ADN programs
- 7 offer BS/BSN programs

Additionally (and concurrently) there are

- 2 LPN (2 schools have one in development or are launching this year) programs
- 3 ABSN programs
- 3 RN to BS programs
- 7 MSN programs
- 3 schools offering post masters certificates and
- One doctoral program

Changes

More than ½ our schools are increasing their enrollment caps for 2023

New programs being introduced:

- Beal—FNP and Prelicensure BSN
- CMMC—Evening/ weekend program begun January 23 and will increase enrollment to 40 in January of 2024
- HU-3 year BSN Fa 23, RN-BS with leadership, humanities and global health tracts.
- NMCC is piloting an accelerated AD program
- SJC starting an Accel program this fall and a post masters certificate in fall 2023
- SMCC started a Brunswick cohort (fa22) and a PN program (LPN) begins in fa 23
- UMA has a new part-time option
- UMFK started a PMHNP this summer
- UNE is phasing out the Masters and changing to a DNP for the nurse anesthesia program

Faculty

- Faculty numbers in 2021-2022 were at 173 full-time (FT) faculty (up from 171 in 2019-2020, 146 in 2016).
- 102/173 FT faculty members (59%) are under the age of 50.
- 108/173 FT faculty members (62%) have a Master's degree. 51/173 (29%) have a doctorate: 47/173 (27%) have a Doctorate in nursing and two percent have a Doctorate in another field.
- 29/173 of our FT Maine Nurse faculty are pursuing a higher degree –about 16%; and 12/15 (80%) of our programs provide funding or release for this education.
- Our FT faculty is still 6% male and 94% female—little change over the last 7 years and 6% non-white an increase of 5% over that time.
- FT faculty salaries are still close to what they were seven years ago with average salaries for Master's preparation at 58.4K and for Doctoral preparation 67.2K.
- We have 11 open fulltime vacancies (this doesn't reflect positions that aren't being replaced).
- Our part-time (PT) faculty is double the size of our FT faculty, significantly younger and much less educated.
- There are as many as 65 open positions for PT faculty.
- Pay ranges widely and is reported differently by school but pay is often NOT based on experience in teaching (only 5/15 schools differentiate pay on experience).
- Orientation is provided across the board for clinical faculty but ranges from one hour to two full days with a mentor.
- Formal training ranges from one hour to 40 hours (two schools offer this robust 40 hour preparation for part-time faculty).
- 58 of 334 of PT faculty (17%) are pursuing higher degrees; more than ½ of the schools offer incentives for this pursuit.
- Why so little interest? Time, cost, responsibility and it is no longer required for adjunct/part time faculty so motivation is a problem.
- About a third of schools report that they have had to change their model, ask for a waiver, or lower standards for teaching because of lack of qualified part-time faculty.

Students

- There were 3119 FT students in 2022 across all programs and 951 PT students.
- We graduated 1160 students across all programs from Sept 2021-August 2022. Our BS programs are still graduating our largest percentage (55%) of students but there was a sharp decline in graduates in every type of program (AD, BS, RN-BS and MS) from 2020 to 2022 (slide 52).
- Applications to AD programs were way down in 2022, a trend that started in 2020 (slide 57).
- Applications to BS programs are up slightly (slide 59).
- Applications to RN-BS are small but steady.
- Applications to Masters Programs are down from 2020 but up from 2017.

Programs

- 8/15 Maine programs require an entrance exam.
- Some programs are increasing use of simulation while others are removing simulation that counts as clinical.
- About ½ of programs have resources for English language learners.
- Most of our programs (12/15) retain >85% of graduates into the Maine nursing workforce.
- Every school collects data on where their graduates are employed after graduation.
- 12/15 schools continue to use the Maine Nursing Competencies as program outcomes.

COVID Exit Signs

- Many schools continue to struggle with clinical placements post Covid, especially in the specialties. School sites, long term care, community sites are closed off to students and shortages of acute care clinical sites or the number of students accepted on units has decreased. Every single school reports difficulty with clinical placement.
- Most schools are back to or close to 100% face to face clinical hours in 2022.
- Covid has had lasting effects. Schools report in addition to problems with clinical access, student illness, limited clinical capacity due to continued use of a traveling nurse staff who will not take students, more recorded absences, expectations for make-up, students who are entering college behind, students who are suffering more emotional distress, increased expectations for remote options. In contrast, some schools report being back to work as usual.
- There has been fairly minimal impact on graduation (our numbers show we increased graduations) during Covid. Some schools discussed the impact on student confidence and test scores.
- Some schools report that Covid had little effect on their programs, however most are maintaining some changes made over the pandemic: smaller clinical groups, balancing clinicals in and out of acute care, more flexibility, smaller groups in lab and simulation, bigger classes in Pharm and Nutrition are delivered remotely, providing opportunities NOT to miss time for illness—and I assume weather-- (using Zoom options). Some schools report they are putting more emphasis on well-being—and conversely, the need to address coping issues and anxiety in students is reported. Several schools report becoming more creative with experiential learning, community care, standardized patients, leveraging technology and integrating telehealth.
- Some changes that will be adopted permanently include: more simulation, use of Zoom (especially for make-up/illness). Schools are using more simulation for specialty practice (reproductive and child health) and more threading of mental health through the curriculum, and strengthening pedagogy of remote learning.

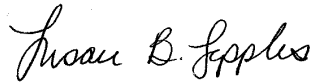
Acknowledgements & Next Steps

Thank you to my peers for the 100% participation on this survey, thank you for your honest appraisal of what is good, what is not, and how we are rebuilding our programs post-pandemic. Thank you to Dr. Brenda Petersen for supporting the analysis of this data through research funds from the USM SON and for continuing to host this open access data set on our School of Nursing site.

Thank you most to my long-term colleague, analyst, and friend Jennifer Pratt who makes sure we have all our IRB permissions, communicates with all of you to get this survey completed, and goes over the data with a fine tooth comb making sure it is reported well and concisely so that all of us have access to this rich data. I could not, actually would not, do this work without you.

We will be conducting our next survey in December of 2024.

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan B. Sepples". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S'.

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