Non-Returning Student Report
Fall 2015

Quick Facts

- The Non-Returning Student Report examines students who left the Rutgers School of Nursing without graduating.

- The study includes a National Student Clearinghouse StudentTracker query to obtain transfer-out information and a short questionnaire sent to non-returning students.

- The Second Degree program has the lowest attrition rate (2.9 percent) while the RN to BS and Post-Master's Certificate programs have the highest attrition rates (25.2 percent and 18.2 percent respectively).

- Attrition rates of generic students differed by only 2 percent among the New Brunswick and Newark campuses indicating that campus is not a strong predictor of persistence.

- The majority of non-returning students from the Generic Program transfer-out to other institutions (65.2 percent), while the majority of non-returning students from the Second Degree and RN to BS programs drop-out altogether as opposed to transferring (100 percent and 82.1 percent respectively). At the graduate level, we also see the majority of non-returning students dropping out as opposed to transferring out.

- Transfer-outs from the Generic Program tend to switch to non-nursing majors and transfer within the Rutgers University system. Not surprisingly, graduate level transfer-outs tend to stick with nursing as their major and transfer outside of the Rutgers University system.

- Half of DNP survey respondents reported that they plan on returning to the Rutgers School of Nursing to eventually continue their studies. This suggests there is a potential opportunity to recruit previously withdrawn DNP students back into the program.

- Fifty-three percent of BS students, 75 percent of MSN, and 50 percent of DNP students cited that personal reasons were the sole or primary reason for leaving the Rutgers School of Nursing as opposed to institutional reasons.

Introduction

This report represents the inaugural Non-Returning Student Report for the Rutgers School of Nursing. The 2015 Non-Returning Student Report examines the attrition of students during the Spring 2015 and Fall 2015 semesters. The population for this study was defined as students who met all of the following criteria:

- The student was a degree-seeking student enrolled in Fall 2014.
- The student was no longer enrolled in Fall 2015.
- The student did not graduate.
- Students that were academically dismissed or on official leave of absence were excluded from the study.
- The School Nurse Certificate and PhD programs were excluded from this study.

A total of 133 students fit this description and were included in our population. The non-returning students were examined using a triangulated approach and the report is divided into the following three sections:

- **Section I:** This section takes a look at the institutional data of these students to identify some key characteristics such as what programs they were enrolled in, what campus they were taking courses, and how well they were doing academically prior to leaving.

- **Section II:** For this section, the population of non-returning students was sent to the National Student Clearinghouse via a StudentTracker query. The data returned from the clearinghouse allows us to examine the subsequent enrollment activity of our population after they left the Rutgers School of Nursing.

- **Section III:** This section examines the reasons why students leave the Rutgers School of Nursing. Data for this section was collected using a brief online survey.

Section I. Who are we losing?

Program: When examining the 133 non-returning students by program, we see that our Second Degree program has the lowest attrition rate (2.9 percent) while the RN to BS and Post-Master's Certificate programs have the highest attrition rate (25.2 percent and 18.2 percent respectively). This information is congruent with our program completion rates which are lowest for the RN to BS and Post-Master's Certificate programs.

Table 1: Attrition Rates by Program

Program	Enrolled in Fall 2014	Non-Returning in Spring 15/Fall 15	Attrition Rate (%)
Undergraduate			
Generic	425	23	5.4%
Second Degree	209	6	2.9%
RN to BS	111	28	25.2%
Graduate			
MSN	554	28	5.1%
PMC	11	2	18.2%
DNP	434	46	10.6%
Total	**1,744**	**133**	**7.6%**

Campus: With the Second Degree and graduate programs being offered predominantly in Newark and the RN to BS program being taken primarily online, the only program that we analyzed by campus was the Generic Program.   The results didn't indicate that campus was a strong predictor of attrition.

Table 2: Attrition of the Generic Program by Campus

Program	Enrolled in Fall 2014	Non-Returning in Spring 15/Fall 15	Attrition Rate (%)
New Brunswick	207	10	4.8%
Newark	176	12	6.8%
Blackwood	42	1	2.4%
Total	**425**	**23**	**5.4%**

Section II. – Where are these students going?

Transfer-outs versus drop-outs: The majority of non-returning students from the Generic Program transfer to another institution (65.2 percent) while the majority of those attriting from the Second Degree and RN to BS Program drop-out altogether as opposed to enrolling elsewhere (100 percent and 82.1 percent respectively). At the graduate level, we also see the majority of attriters dropping-out as opposed to transferring-out.

Table 3: Transfer-Outs versus Drop-Outs

Program	Non-Returning in Spring 15/Fall 15	Transfer-Outs		Drop-Outs	
		N	%	N	%
Undergraduate					
Generic	23	15	65.2%	8	34.8%
Second Degree	6	0	0.0%	6	100.0%
RN to BS	28	5	17.6%	23	82.1%
Graduate					
MSN	28	3	10.7%	25	89.3%
PMC	2	0	0.0%	2	100.0%
DNP	46	9	19.6%	37	80.4%
Total	**133**	**32**	**24.1%**	**101**	**75.9%**

Transfer-out institutions: Transfer-outs from the Generic Program tend to switch to non-nursing majors and transfer within the Rutgers University system. Of the 15 Generic transfer-outs, only one transferred outside of the Rutgers system. The five RN to BS transfer-outs comprised of three transferring back to a community college and two transferring into a nursing programs at a 4-year private institution. Graduate level transfer-outs tend to stick with nursing as their major. Of 11 graduate level transfer-outs, the National Student Clearinghouse reveals that only one enrolled in a non-nursing program. Tables 5 through 7 on the next page show the transfer-out profiles for each of these programs.

Table 4: Transfer-Out Profile – Generic Program Attriters

Transfer-Out Institution	New Major of Enrollment	N
Rutgers - Newark	Biology	1
Rutgers - Newark	English	1
Rutgers - Newark	Psychology	3
Rutgers - Newark	Public Administration	1
Rutgers - -New Brunswick	N/A	1
Rutgers - -New Brunswick	Human Resource Management	1
Rutgers - -New Brunswick	Marketing	1
Rutgers - -New Brunswick	Planning And Public Policy	1
Rutgers - -New Brunswick	Public Health	2
Rutgers - -New Brunswick	Unspecified (Matriculating)	2
Sussex County Community College	Non – Specified	1

Table 5: Transfer-Out Profile – RN to BS Program Attriters

Transfer-Out Institution	New Major of Enrollment	N
Brookdale Community College	N/A	2
Raritan Valley Community College	Undeclared Visiting	1
Texas Woman's University	Nursing (Entry)	1
Thomas Edison State College	Nursing	1

Table 6: Transfer-Out Profile – MSN Attriters

Transfer-Out Institution	New Major of Enrollment	N
Chamberlain College Of Nursing	Nursing	1
Rutgers - Newark	N/A	1
Thomas Edison State College	Nursing Education	1

Table 7: Transfer-Out Profile – DNP Attriters

Transfer-Out Institution	New Major of Enrollment	N
Mercy College	Business Administration	1
Monmouth University	N/A	1
Pace University	Family Nurse Practitioner	1
Regis University	Nursing	1
Rutgers - Camden	Nursing	1
Rutgers -New Brunswick	N/A	1
Saint Peter's University	Adult-Gerontology	1
Walden University	Nursing	1

Section III. Why did students leave?

The entire population of 133 non-returning students was surveyed and 39 survey responses were received yielding an overall response rate of 29.3 percent. The table below summarizes the number of respondents by degree-level. The 16 BS respondents were distributed as follows: Generic (n=8), 2nd Degree (n=3), and RN to BS (n=5). Eight of the nine MSN respondents were in NP programs. Three of the 12 DNP students were in the Post-Master's programs while the remaining nine were in the Post-Baccalaureate programs. We will not report results for the Post-Master's Certificate programs due to their small size (n<5).

Table 8: Survey Respondent Profile

	Respondents (N)	Response Rate (%)
BS	16	28.1%
MSN	9	32.1%
DNP	12	26.1%
Post-Master's Cert.	2	100.0%
Total	**39**	**29.3%**

Students were asked about their current and future educational plans. Slightly more than two out of five BS respondents were already attending another institution or planning to do so. Two out of five MSN students, on the other hand, were unsure about their future educational plans. An additional 40 percent were already enrolled at other institutions or plan to do so. Half of DNP students were planning on returning to the Rutgers School of Nursing to continue their studies and the other half were either unsure of their educational future or already enrolled at a different institution.

Table 9: Future Educational Plans of Survey Respondents

	I do not plan on returning to college		I am taking time off but I plan on resuming my education at the RU-SN		I am taking time off but I plan on continuing my education at another institution		I am already enrolled at another institution and plan to continue there		I am unsure		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
BS	2	12.5%	3	18.8%	2	12.5%	5	31.3%	4	25.0%	16	100%
MSN	0	0.0%	1	20.0%	1	20.0%	1	20.0%	2	40.0%	5	100%
DNP	0	0.0%	6	50.0%	0	0.0%	4	33.3%	2	16.7%	12	100%

Fifty-three percent of BS students, 75 percent of MSN, and 50 percent of DNP students identified personal reasons as the sole or primary reason for leaving the Rutgers School of Nursing. The remainder cited institutional reasons as the sole or primary reason for leaving.

Table 10: Personal versus Institutional Reasons for Leaving

	Personal reasons unrelated to the education and services that I received from the RU-SN		Institutional reasons directly related to the education and services that I received at the RU-SN		Both personal and institutional reasons but mainly personal		Both personal and institutional reasons but mainly institutional		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
BS	5	33.3%	5	33.3%	3	20.0%	2	13.3%	15	100%
MSN	3	75.0%	1	25.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	100%
DNP	4	33.3%	4	33.3%	2	16.7%	2	16.7%	12	100%

The survey provided our former students with the opportunity to share the personal and institutional reasons for leaving the the Rutgers School of Nursing. The personal reasons that were cited included comments about finances, career, family responsibilities, and health issues. The institutional reasons for their departure varied, ranging from responsiveness of faculty and staff and to school policies. The institutional reasons that students cited are listed in the table below, broken out by undergraduate and graduate students.

Table 11: Institutional Reasons for Leaving

Undergraduate Respondents

I had to take Microbiology and Anatomy & Physiology in the same semester, and it was very difficult to balance the two. In order to take one of the necessary courses, I had to complete both these classes during this semester. The other class was only offered in the fall semester.

I moved to Texas and was told since I didn't live in NJ that I couldn't continue the online program

I was given a few semesters off due to illness. I needed more time off but I was told that they could not give me more time and I would have to start over.

The sophomore and freshmen years of the nursing program do not prepare you in the slightest for the rigors of junior year when you actually study Nursing.

There were some great professors in the program, but many others were somewhat rude and unhelpful. Some of them seemed jaded about their careers and didn't seem interested in helping the students with their future careers. The classes during freshman and sophomore year didn't really do anything to prepare students for what actual nursing was like, in my opinion, and I sometimes felt like we were given extremely outdated information concerning current practices in hospitals. The clinical experience was well organized, but some of the classes that went along with the junior year curriculum seemed really unorganized and some of the professors teaching these courses were intimidating or rude to the point of being unapproachable. I just got the feelings that there were two categories of professors: the ones who truly cared and truly had a passion for nursing and the ones who couldn't care less what happened to their students.

I felt that the program was poorly managed and the teachers were not helpful in accommodating with the students. Difficult in getting in contact with faculty for classes. Not organized appropriately.

Graduate Respondents

My main reason for leaving the Rutgers program was the poor communication and unrealistic expectations of the computer instructor. His class was the worst experience of my entire educational career and the idea of returning for more in a second semester was psychologically and emotionally daunting. I tried to email my advisor several times without a response. After 3 weeks of being lost with no response to my requests for help I decided to cut my losses and withdraw from the program.

Lack of communication and support from a faculty member who teaches online courses.

When I was accepted into this program I was thrilled and proud to be a part of such a prestigious and recognized school. I enjoyed the class I took but simply cannot continue at Rutgers because the school does not offer tuition deferment and since I rely on reimbursement from my employer to continue my education, I had no choice but to leave.

I enjoyed my time at Rutgers ,however I repeated pathophysiology twice received a c both times I understand the academic standards are set very hi although the school is in high academic standing I feel a lack of personnel contact though the nursing department np program needs to be reevaluated I clinical experience for the past 22 years would have enhanced my success however two c 's prohibited me from moving forward thank you for this opportunity for me to express my thought s on this subject .