



**Center for Health Workforce Planning
Bureau of Health Care Access
Iowa Department of Public Health**

**Nursing Educators in Iowa Speak Out: A Call to Action
June 1, 2004**

A viable supply of qualified faculty nurse educators is required to educate Iowa's nursing workforce. Key stakeholders, including the Iowa Council of Nurses, Iowa Nurses Association, Iowa Association of Colleges of Nursing and Iowa Community College Nurse Education Directors Association identified a need to support the current pool of Iowa's nursing educators and prepare replacement faculty. At the request of the Center for Health Workforce Planning's Recruitment/Nursing Education Forecasting Group, three concurrent surveys were conducted to collect information about Iowa's nursing faculty and nursing education programs. The purposes of the surveys were: 1) to quantify the supply and projected demand for nursing faculty and 2) to identify incentives and barriers to building and sustaining a career in nursing education.

Program directors from 12 baccalaureate, 17 associate degree or combined associate/practical nursing, and one combined associate/baccalaureate degree nursing programs were sent an electronic request to complete the program companion survey, and forward notification and a request to complete the faculty surveys to all nursing faculty in their institutions. Twenty-one of 30 programs completed the survey for a response rate of 70%. The faculty surveys (enrolled and not enrolled versions) were distributed by the program directors to 196 faculty in baccalaureate programs and 219 faculty in associate degree programs. Of the 415 faculty who received the survey, 162 faculty members (41 enrolled and 121 not enrolled) completed their respective version for a response rate of 39%.

I. Findings of the Nursing Program Companion Survey Completed by Program Directors

- Over one-half of those completing the program companion survey work as a program administrator with teaching responsibility. More than one-third of respondents are full-time administrators.
- The largest proportion (62%) of the programs offer an associate degree in nursing, and over half (52%) of respondents offer a practical nursing program. Baccalaureate degrees are offered by 43% of the programs. Fourteen of the programs (two-thirds) offer more than one type of nursing program.
- The majority (90%) of full-time faculty positions are classified as having both classroom and clinical responsibilities, whereas the majority of part-time faculty positions (80%) and adjunct faculty positions (78%) are clinical only.
- Thirty-seven percent of all faculty are employed on an adjunct basis. Full-time and part-time faculty comprise 31% and 32% of the total nursing faculty workforce respectively.

- Respondents report 58 faculty vacancies (11 full-time, 25 part-time and 22 adjunct) in spring 2004. The greatest need for faculty is in the medical/surgical specialty area where 36 vacant positions, or 62 percent of total vacancies, are found.
- Respondents project 128 faculty vacancies (24 full-time, 39 part-time and 65 adjunct) in fall 2004. The greatest need for faculty is projected in the medical/surgical specialty area where 75 vacant positions, or 59% of total vacancies, are projected.
- The number of unfilled full-time nursing faculty positions is expected to increase from spring 2004 to fall 2004 in the following specialties: medical/surgical, maternal/child, psychiatric, community health, ARNP-NP, and other.
- The number of unfilled part-time nursing faculty positions is expected to increase from spring 2004 to fall 2004 in the following specialties: medical/surgical, pediatrics, community health and ARNP-NP.
- The number of unfilled adjunct nursing faculty positions is expected to increase from spring 2004 to fall 2004 in the following specialties: medical/surgical, pediatrics, maternal/child health, psychiatric, community health, gerontology, clinical preceptors, and other.
- Over half (57%) of respondents do not feel that the number of faculty positions budgeted by their institutions accurately reflects the number of faculty needed to teach. Further analysis revealed that the answers to this item do not vary significantly by the type of nursing program(s) offered by the responding institution.
- No respondents report that nursing faculty positions are either fully or partially subsidized by an entity external to the institution. Twenty-nine percent of respondents identify a need for such financial support.
- Nearly two-thirds (62%) of respondents report that their institution does not offer benefits to part-time nursing faculty. Benefits were not defined in this survey.
- Almost half (48%) of respondents report that their institution caps nursing student enrollments.
- The majority (86%) of respondents anticipate a need to cap nursing student enrollments in the future.
- Projecting three years out, respondents identify an aggregate need for 61 full-time and 69 part-time nursing faculty beyond the current number of budgeted positions if enrollment trends continue. On average, the program directors project a need to add 2.90 full-time and 3.83 part-time nursing faculty positions per institution by 2007.
- When asked to compare their present need for nursing faculty to the previous year, 76% of respondents report a need for more nursing faculty.
- In the aggregate, respondents project a total of 27 full-time and 18 part-time nursing faculty retirements over the next three years. On average, the program directors anticipate 1.42 full-time and 1.13 part-time faculty retirements per institution.

- Over half (57%) of the respondents report that the time required to fill a vacant nursing faculty position exceeds 90 days. Only 5% of programs are able to fill nursing faculty positions in less than 60 days.
- The respondents report receiving an average of 3.63 applicants for each vacant nursing faculty position. This item does not address applicant qualifications.
- Respondents report a total of 60 applicants (ranging from 0 to 12 per institution) who were academically unqualified and did not wish or were unable to pursue the academic requirements of the position. This item does not identify specific degrees or reasons why applicants do not wish to pursue advanced education.
- Respondents report a total of 39 applicants (ranging from 0 to 6 per institution) who declined employment in the past 12 months because the salary was unacceptable.
- Respondents report a total of 44 nursing faculty currently enrolled in programs leading to a master's degree in nursing or an applicable field. This reflects an average of 2.10 enrolled faculty per program at single point in time.
- Respondents report a total of 40 clinical instructors currently enrolled in baccalaureate programs. This reflects an average of 2.00 enrolled clinical instructors per program at a single point in time.
- More than 80% of responding programs report that nursing student enrollments have increased in the current academic year. Enrollments increased by more than 30% in one-third of the reporting programs and remained level in 14% of the programs. No program reports a decrease in enrollments.
- The most frequently reported impact is increased faculty workload (95%) followed by more students in the classroom (86%), increased need for support services (81%), new or longer admission waiting lists (62%) and more clinical groups (57%). More than half the respondents report their institution is being impacted in all these ways.
- Ninety percent of reporting programs project an increase in nursing student enrollments in the next academic year. Over half (57%) anticipate more than a 10% increase in enrollments, and almost one-fourth anticipate more than a 20% increase. Many programs that project an increase are constrained by capped enrollments. No program projects a decrease in enrollments in the next year.
- Almost two-thirds of the respondents (62%) do not think that nursing faculty staffing levels will be adequate to meet enrollment demand in the next academic year.
- Respondents are almost evenly split in their perception of the adequacy of the number of student clinical experiences to meet projected enrollment demand in the next academic year. More than half do not think the number of clinical experiences will be adequate in one year.
- Despite the increased demand for clinical experiences and clinical instructors, 62% of respondents feel the quality of student clinical experiences is adequate to meet enrollment demand and clinical objectives in the next academic year. Forty percent do not think the quality of student clinical experiences will be adequate in one year.
- The top strategies (i.e., identified by more than 30% of respondents) that help to accommodate increased enrollment are: increased part-time nursing faculty (57%), expanded clinical experiences (43%), increased full-time nursing faculty (38%) and expanded evening/weekend classes (38%). Strategies least frequently identified include increased non-academic support services, expanded on-line classes, and increased faculty salaries.

- Over three-fourths of respondents report that nursing faculty in their programs have flexibility to schedule clinical teaching in the evenings (76%) and on the weekends (48%).
- The top strategies identified by more than 30% of respondents that help to retain nursing faculty are: salary and benefits incentives (52%), faculty mentoring during first 12 months of employment (48%), tuition agreement for family members (38%), part-time employment option (38%) and opportunities for professional advancement (33%). Some respondents comment that while they are not presently making use of some of these strategies, they would like to be able to do so. One respondent identifies a need for recommendations on the use of substitute faculty.
- When asked to describe their institutional policy on tuition reimbursement, nine respondents (43%) state that their institution does not offer tuition reimbursement for faculty or has no formal policy.
- Only full-time faculty are eligible for tuition reimbursement or professional development funds in five institutions (24%).
- Varying levels of tuition reimbursement or professional development funds are available to both full-time and part-time faculty in six institutions (29%).
- One college offers free tuition for courses taken at the institution toward completion of a bachelor's degree.
- Five institutions provide faculty salary increases upon completion of additional coursework.
- Eleven (52%) reporting institution provide for release time to faculty who pursue advanced degrees. Most require the individual faculty member to schedule release time around existing clinical and classroom teaching responsibilities.
- Nine responding institutions (43%) do not have a policy on faculty release time in pursuit of advanced degrees.

II. Findings of the Survey of Nursing Faculty Currently Enrolled in a Formal Education Program

- Nursing faculty respondents who are currently enrolled in formal education programs exhibit between 1 and 36 years of teaching experience with a mean of 6.31
- The majority (71%) of nursing faculty respondents who are enrolled in formal education programs are employed as full-time faculty.
- Nursing faculty respondents who are enrolled in formal education programs spend an average of 13 hours per week teaching in a clinical setting, 10.32 hours per week preparing for teaching, 6.95 hours per week teaching nursing theory in the classroom, 6.46 hours per week evaluating learning and 3.6 hours per week teaching laboratory skills. Respondents reported means of fewer than 3 hours per week on all other faculty responsibilities.
- The average contract period for nursing faculty respondents who are enrolled in formal education programs is 9.47 months per year. Contract periods range from 2 to 12 months per year.

- Nursing faculty respondents who are enrolled in formal education programs work an average of 4.47 hours per week for another employer while teaching nursing and 6.45 hours per week while not teaching nursing. Most do not work for another employer.
- The majority (61%) of nursing faculty respondents who are enrolled in formal education programs report that their teaching loads have increased over the course of their nursing education careers. Almost one-third report no change in their teaching load.
- A large majority (83%) of nursing faculty respondents who are enrolled in formal education programs definitely intend to build and/or continue their nursing education career. An additional 12% indicate their tentative intent to do so.
- Among enrolled nursing faculty respondents enrolled in formal education programs, the most commonly identified incentive to remain in nursing education is enjoyment of teaching (83%). This is followed by academic schedule and work hours (73%) and opportunity for personal growth (51%). The least frequently identified incentive is recognition from administration and colleagues.
- When asked to identify barriers that might prevent them from remaining in nursing education, the nursing faculty respondents enrolled in formal education programs identify salary and benefits (53%), expense to continue their education (23%), increased workload (10%), lack of preparedness of incoming students (7%), and inadequate program resources such as curriculum, administrative support and supplies (7%).
- The majority (61%) of nursing faculty respondents who are enrolled in formal education programs report that they accepted lower salaries to teach nursing.
- Of those nursing faculty respondents who are enrolled in formal education programs, 37% have as their highest degree a masters in nursing, 37% have a baccalaureate degree in nursing and 7% have an associate degree in nursing. Twenty percent of survey respondents did not complete this item.
- Nursing faculty respondents who are enrolled in formal education programs are enrolled in 19 programs, 8 of which are out-of-state. The largest number (23%) are enrolled at the University of Iowa. An additional 13% are enrolled at Iowa State University, and 8% are enrolled at either Clarke College or the University of Phoenix – Online.
- Almost three-fourths (71%) of nursing faculty respondents who are enrolled in formal education programs select a nursing education track. Other tracks selected by the respondents are clinical (17%), administration (10%), and research (2%).
- Approximately one-third (34%) of nursing faculty respondents who are enrolled in formal education programs are earning a masters degree in nursing. Ten percent are earning a baccalaureate degree in nursing, and 7% are earning a doctorate degree in nursing. Almost half of the respondents did not complete this item.
- Nursing faculty respondents who are enrolled in formal education programs anticipate that an average total debt of \$17,843.75 will be incurred by the time they complete their degree. The minimum amount of debt projected is \$5,000 and maximum amount is \$40,000.
- Within the first year of completion of their degree, 73% of nursing faculty respondents who are enrolled in formal education programs anticipate an increase in salary of less than \$5,000. No respondent projected an increase greater than \$10,000.

- Less than one-third of nursing faculty respondents who are enrolled in formal education programs report that their nursing education employer offers tuition reimbursement. When tuition reimbursement is provided, it is most likely to be less than half of actual expenses.
- Equal proportions of nursing faculty respondents who are enrolled in formal education programs report that the availability of tuition reimbursement does (37%) or does not (37%) impact their choice to be a faculty member.
- Less than one-third of nursing faculty respondents who are enrolled in formal education programs report that their employing institution offers release time to attend class.
- Release time to attend class impacts the choice of 42% of enrolled nursing faculty respondents to teach nursing. Approximately one-fourth of the respondents reported that release time to attend class did not impact their choice to be a faculty member.
- Sixty-eight percent of respondents report that their employing institution provides incentives other than tuition reimbursement and release time to attend classes which impact their choice to teach nursing. Incentives identified include health care benefits, tenure and ability to advance to a full professorship, peer support, salary advancement, professional development funding, and on-line coursework.
- Tuition and fees are the most common barriers to pursuing an advanced degree to teach nursing identified by respondents who are enrolled in formal education programs (63%). Other barriers include minimal salary differential after graduation (44%), personal responsibilities (39%), and anticipated loan burden (34%). Barriers identified in the 'other' category included possible loss of faculty position, poor advancement potential, age, and declining interest in nursing.
- The mean current age of nursing faculty respondents who are enrolled in formal education programs is 45.33 years. The mean age for this group at the time they became nursing faculty was 39.08 years.
- On average, nursing faculty enrolled in formal education programs plan to remain in nursing education 15.18 years. They plan to teach nursing in Iowa for an average of 14.24 years.
- Ninety-three percent of nursing faculty enrolled in formal education programs are female.
- The largest proportion (51%) of nursing faculty enrolled in formal education programs teach in associate degree programs followed by those who teach in practical nursing programs (44%). Twenty-nine percent teach in baccalaureate programs while only 2% teach in masters and doctorate programs. A total of 11 nursing faculty members enrolled in a formal education program teach in institutions that offer more than one type of nursing degree or teach at multiple institutions.

III. Findings of the Survey of Nursing Faculty Not Enrolled in a Formal Education Program

- Nursing faculty who are not enrolled in a formal education program range in years of faculty experience from 1 to 36 years with a mean of 12.97 years.

- Almost three-fourths (73%) of nursing faculty who are not enrolled in formal education programs are employed as full-time faculty members.
- Nursing faculty not enrolled in a formal education program spend a mean of 10.55 hours per week teaching in a clinical setting, 9.03 hours per week preparing for teaching, 5.35 hours per week teaching nursing theory in the classroom, 5.10 hours per week evaluating learning, 3.14 hours per week teaching laboratory skills, and 3.04 hours per week providing program coordination. On average, respondents reported fewer than 3 hours per week on all other faculty responsibilities.
- The average contract period for nursing faculty members who are not enrolled in a formal education program is 9.58 months per year.
- Faculty not enrolled in a formal education program work an average of 3.06 hours per week for another employer while teaching nursing and 7.07 hours per week while not teaching nursing. Seventy-three percent of this group do not work for another employer while teaching nursing, and 55% do not work for another employer even while not teaching.
- The majority (67%) of nursing faculty not enrolled in a formal education program report an increase in teaching load over the course of their nursing education careers. One-quarter report no change in their teaching load.
- Half of the nursing faculty who are not enrolled in formal education programs reported they definitely intend to build and/or continue their nursing education career. An additional 40% tentatively indicated their intent to do so.
- Among nursing faculty not enrolled in formal education programs, the most commonly identified incentive to remain in nursing education is the enjoyment of teaching (93%). This is followed by academic schedule and work hours (61%) and opportunity for personal growth (49%).
- When asked to identify barriers that might prevent them from remaining in nursing education, the nursing faculty not enrolled in formal education programs identified the following factors: salary and benefits (39%), increased workload (28%), inadequate leadership/administrative support (12%), lack of preparedness of incoming students (9%), regulatory requirements (7%), and expense to continue their education (6%).
- More than two-thirds (67%) of nursing faculty who are not enrolled in formal education programs reported accepting a decrease in salary to teach nursing.
- Of those nursing faculty not enrolled in a formal education program, 57% respondents have a masters in nursing, 20% have a baccalaureate in nursing, 2% have a doctorate in nursing and 1% have an associate degree in nursing. Twenty percent of survey respondents did not complete this item.
- Forty-one percent of nursing faculty members who are not enrolled in a formal education program report that they already have the degree required to continue teaching nursing and do not intend to pursue additional education at this time. The most commonly identified barriers to pursuing an advanced degree to teach nursing are tuition and fees (31%) and minimal salary differential after graduation (31%). Nursing faculty not enrolled in formal education programs identified other significant barriers including personal responsibilities (26%) and anticipated loan burden (17%).

- The mean current age of nursing faculty not enrolled in a formal education program is 48.52 years old. The mean age for this group at the time they became nursing faculty was 35.12 years.
- On average, nursing faculty not enrolled in a formal education program plan to remain in nursing education 9.55 years. They plan to teach nursing in Iowa for an average of 9.00 years.
- Ninety-eight percent of nursing faculty who are not enrolled in a formal education program are female.
- The largest proportion (50%) of nursing faculty not enrolled in a formal education program teach in associate degree programs followed by those who teach in practical nursing programs (37%). Thirty-four percent teach in baccalaureate programs, 7% teach in a masters program while only 3% teach in doctorate programs.

IV. Comparative Analysis of Faculty Enrolled in Formal Education Programs vs. Faculty Not Enrolled in Formal Education Programs

- Nursing faculty not enrolled in formal education programs have been faculty members significantly longer (mean = 12.97 years) than their enrolled counterparts (mean = 6.28 years).
- Seventy-five percent of nursing faculty not enrolled in formal education programs intend to build and/or continue their careers in nursing education. This varies significantly from the proportion of nursing faculty enrolled in formal education programs who intend to build and/or continue their careers in nursing education (25%).
- When asked to identify their top incentives to remain in nursing education, nursing faculty enrolled in formal education programs varied significantly from those not enrolled on the following incentives: enjoyment of teaching (83% vs. 93%), institutional support for advanced degrees (12% vs. 3%), and potential for career advancement (17% vs. 3%).
- When asked to identify their perceived barriers to pursuing an advanced degree to teach nursing, nursing faculty enrolled in formal education programs varied significantly from those not enrolled on the following perceived barriers: tuition and fees (63% vs. 31%), anticipated loan burden (34% vs. 17%), and difficulty scheduling courses (20% vs. 8%).
- Nursing faculty not enrolled in formal education programs are significantly older (mean = 48.52 years old) than their enrolled counterparts (mean = 45.33 years old).
- Nursing faculty members not enrolled in formal education programs were significantly younger (mean = 35.12 years old) at the time they became nursing faculty members than were their enrolled counterparts (mean = 39.08 years old).
- Nursing faculty members enrolled in formal education programs intend to remain in nursing education significantly longer (mean = 15.18 years, 14.24 years in Iowa) than their not enrolled counterparts (mean = 9.55 years, 9.45 years in Iowa).

Recommendations of the Forecasting Group to Policy Makers in Iowa

Raise nursing faculty salaries. Make salaries of faculty members who teach nursing commensurate with salaries of nurses whose primary role is provision of patient care in a health facility. In addition to the knowledge, skills and abilities required to provide safe care, faculty who teach nursing possess advanced educational preparation and specialized skills to educate and evaluate students in multiple clinical settings.

Don't flood the market. Balance the projected need for nurses with the availability of jobs for new graduates who want to live and practice in Iowa. Oversupplying the nursing workforce at a time when facilities are taking action to retain experienced nurses leads to unemployment, lower salaries, underutilization of licensed clinicians, out-migration of new nurses and, ultimately, declining enrollments.

Manage resources wisely. Plan and manage limited resources in partnership with nurse educators and employers to maximize student clinical experiences and assure an optimal teaching/learning environment. Design a workplace that promotes faculty communication, efficiency and access to new e-learning technologies.

Understand what nurses do. Recognize the direct relationship between increasing patient acuity and the faculty work effort required for preparation, clinical supervision and assessment of every student's ability to provide safe patient care. New graduates must enter the workforce knowing the basics with the ability to problem solve and act as team members in a high-stakes environment.

Build the teaching skills of adjunct faculty. Assist adjunct faculty to understand and acquire the skills needed to be an excellent teacher. Provide an educational framework for adjunct faculty who demonstrate exemplary clinical skills to learn about curriculum development, teaching strategies and the art of creating a positive, accountable and self-directed learning environment. Jessica Bottenfield, a student member of the forecasting group, commented, "Adjunct faculty provide different a perspective in nursing - an excellent opportunity for working nurses to experience teaching and for students to gain wisdom from the variety of adjunct faculty we encounter."

Value experienced faculty. Include experienced nursing faculty in institutional policy development regarding class and clinical capacity, academic progression and design of the physical teaching/learning environment. Senior faculty members who serve as mentors to new faculty define the culture of the institution and play a key role in leadership development and succession planning.

Exemplify professionalism. Create an educational milieu in which students are encouraged to excel and explore new opportunities in their selected career and participate in professional activities from the time of admission. Angela Freeseemann, a student member of the forecasting group, said, "I feel the values and concepts of professionalism must be taught early and promoted throughout the educational program. The value of professionalism can then be taken into the workplace and used to encourage and inspire." Educators who demonstrate pride in their work, tout the positive, embrace the challenge of their teaching role and exhibit the ability to change energize students to lead the profession they love.

References

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