

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
BOARD OF REGISTRATION IN NURSING

FACULTY VACANCIES AMONG BOARD-APPROVED
NURSING EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN MASSACHUSETTS
2010-2011 and 2011-2012

Spring 2010 Survey

Summary

Nursing program administrators nationwide continue to report increases in faculty vacancies and growing difficulties in recruiting and retaining qualified faculty, particularly those with specific clinical expertise, to meet program expansion needs (American Association of Colleges of Nursing [AACN], 2011; National League for Nursing, 2006). Nursing program administrators in Massachusetts cite similar concerns, noting that returning to clinical practice is contributing to their inability to retain qualified faculty.

Competition with the practice setting is often cited as having the greatest impact on attracting qualified nursing faculty, resulting in the inability to accept qualified applicants into nursing education programs (AACN, 2005 and 2006). Findings from the 2008 faculty vacancy study conducted by the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing (Board) identified returning to clinical practice as well as retirement to be contributing to vacancies among Massachusetts basic nursing education programs (Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing, 2008). The Board surveyed nursing education program administrators in early June 2010 to collect and analyze data to describe nursing faculty vacancies among the 65 Board-approved nursing education programs for academic years 2009-2010 and 2010-2011.

- A total of 40 nurse administrators (62%) responded to the survey by December 28, 2010: 15 of 24 (81%) Practical Nurse (PN) programs and 25 of 41 (61%) Registered Nurse (RN) programs.
- All programs experienced less than projected enrollments. Student enrollments are projected to increase among RN and PN programs by academic year 2011-2012.
- Return to clinical practice was rated as the factor most frequently contributing to pending RN and PN faculty vacancies.
- RN survey respondents rated moving to another position in academia as contributing to pending RN vacancies just as much as returning to clinical practice.
- All program types rated salary range as having the greatest overall impact on the program's ability to recruit qualified faculty and rated competition with clinical practice settings as the second greatest factor impacting the recruitment of qualified faculty.
- Networking continues to be both the preferred method for recruitment and the most successful among RN and PN programs
- The RN program respondents ranked pediatrics as the most difficult clinical specialty to recruit qualified faculty to teach. The PN program respondents reported obstetrics as the most difficult clinical specialty to recruit qualified faculty to teach.
- The availability of a competitive salary and benefit package to offer faculty applicants was cited as the preferred strategy to address faculty vacancies and to assure the preparation of graduates for safe, competent, entry-level practice by RN and PN program respondents.

- Had the 244 CMR 6.04(2)(b) 3 waiver not been available, 31% of RN program survey respondents identified an increase in faculty to student ratio to 1 to10 would have potentially occurred.

The Board's Spring 2010 Nursing Faculty Vacancy Study makes available data that may be used by nursing program faculty and healthcare providers statewide, as well as legislators, regulators, and post secondary and higher education administrators, in the planning for the Commonwealth's current and future nursing education program needs.

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Introduction

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Competition with the practice setting is often cited as having the greatest impact on attracting qualified nursing faculty, resulting in the inability to accept qualified applicants into nursing education programs (AACN, 2005 and 2006). Findings from the 2008 faculty vacancy study conducted by the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing (Board) identified returning to clinical practice as well as retirement to be contributing to vacancies among Massachusetts basic nursing education programs (Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing, 2008). The Board surveyed nursing education program administrators in early June 2010 to collect and analyze data to describe nursing faculty vacancies among the 65 Board-approved nursing education programs for academic years 2009-2010 and 2010-2011.

Methodology

Adapting the 2008 faculty vacancy survey tool, a four-page, 16-item questionnaire was designed to gather data about each program's budgeted full time equivalent (FTE) nursing faculty positions (filled and vacant). To insure consistency, respondents used the Interagency Conference on Nursing Statistics formula to calculate faculty FTEs (Interagency Conference on Nursing Statistics, 1997). No new questions were added to the 2010 survey tool. Content validity of the survey tool had been previously reviewed by two of the nurse educator members of the Board and two senior staff members.

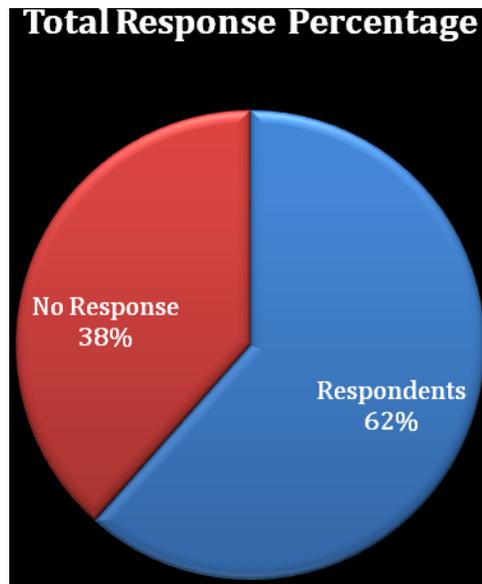
The survey was emailed to all nurse administrators (N=65) on June 15, 2010. A reminder notice was distributed by mail on July 12, 2010 to non-respondents.

Data are reported by program type (Registered Nurse and Practical Nurse). Although data are not reported as such (except when identified), it can also be sorted by RN degree type (hospital based diploma and associate degree, and baccalaureate and higher degree) and by publicly funded institutions. While respondents could select more than one answer to many of the questions, it should be noted that not all respondents answered every survey question; percentages are based on the actual number of respondents to each question.

Results

Number and type of institution offering Board-approved nursing education programs

A total of 40 nurse administrators (62%) responded to the survey by December 28, 2010: 15 of 24 (81%) PN programs and 25 of 41 (61%) RN programs, including 11 of 21 (52%) hospital-based diploma and associate degree programs, and 14 of 20 (70%) baccalaureate and higher degree programs. The number and type of institutions responding to the survey are shown in *Table 1*, (Appendix I).



Current and projected nursing faculty FTEs and FTE vacancies

The number of budgeted FTEs for academic year 2009-2010 was calculated by combining the number of budgeted filled and budgeted vacant faculty FTEs. A total of 555.95 total budgeted FTEs were reported by RN programs for academic year 2009-2010, an overall decrease from academic year 2007-2008. The number of budgeted FTEs for hospital-based and associate degree programs decreased dramatically from 256.24 in academic year 2007-2008 to 130 in academic year 2009-2010.

The total number of FTE RN faculty vacancies reported for academic year 2009-2010 is 20, compared to 6.5 during academic year 2007-2008 but was 32 during academic year 2005-2006. Ten RN program respondents (40%) reported experiencing faculty vacancies for academic year 2009-2010. The percentage of reported faculty vacancy has decreased from academic year 2007-2008.

PN program respondents reported a total of 73 budgeted FTEs, a decrease from 91.63 for academic year 2007-2008 and 84.23 in academic year 2005-2006. Among Practical Nurse programs, there were 0.3 FTE vacancies for academic year 2009-2010 which is less than 6.5 FTE vacancies in academic year 2007-2008 and 7.85 FTE vacancies in academic year 2005-2006.

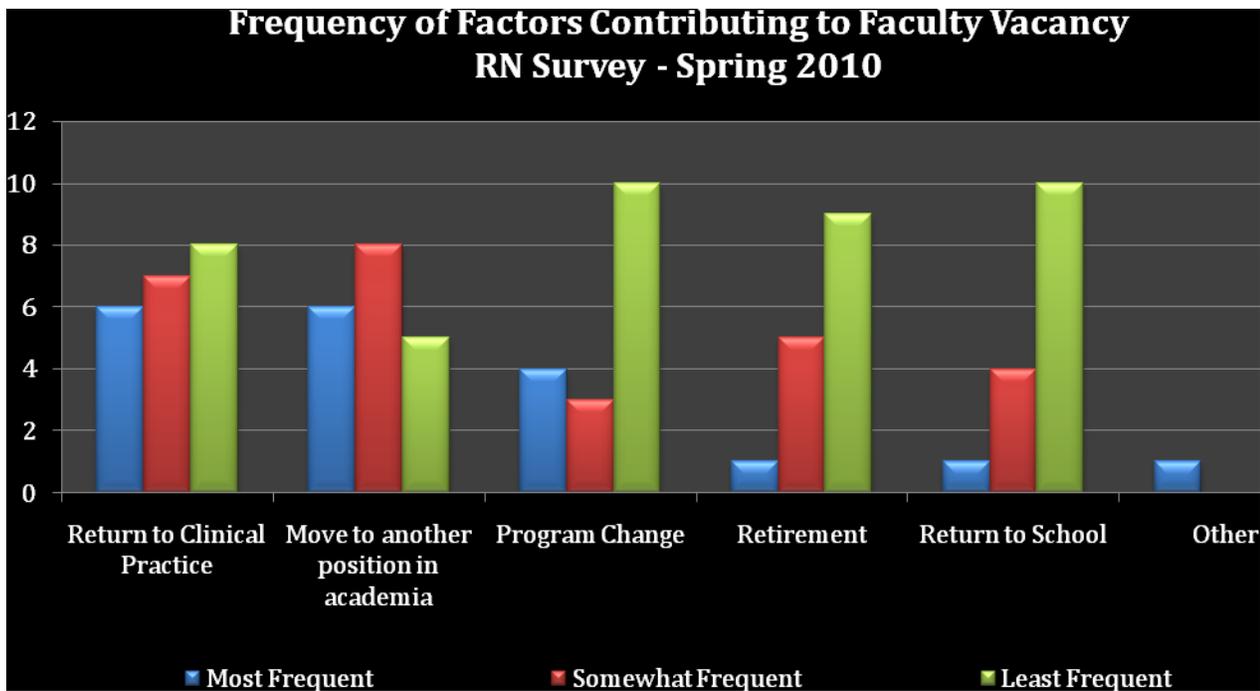
Current and projected FTE data for Registered Nurse and Practical Nurse programs are summarized in *Table 2*, (Appendix I).

Current and projected nursing student enrollment

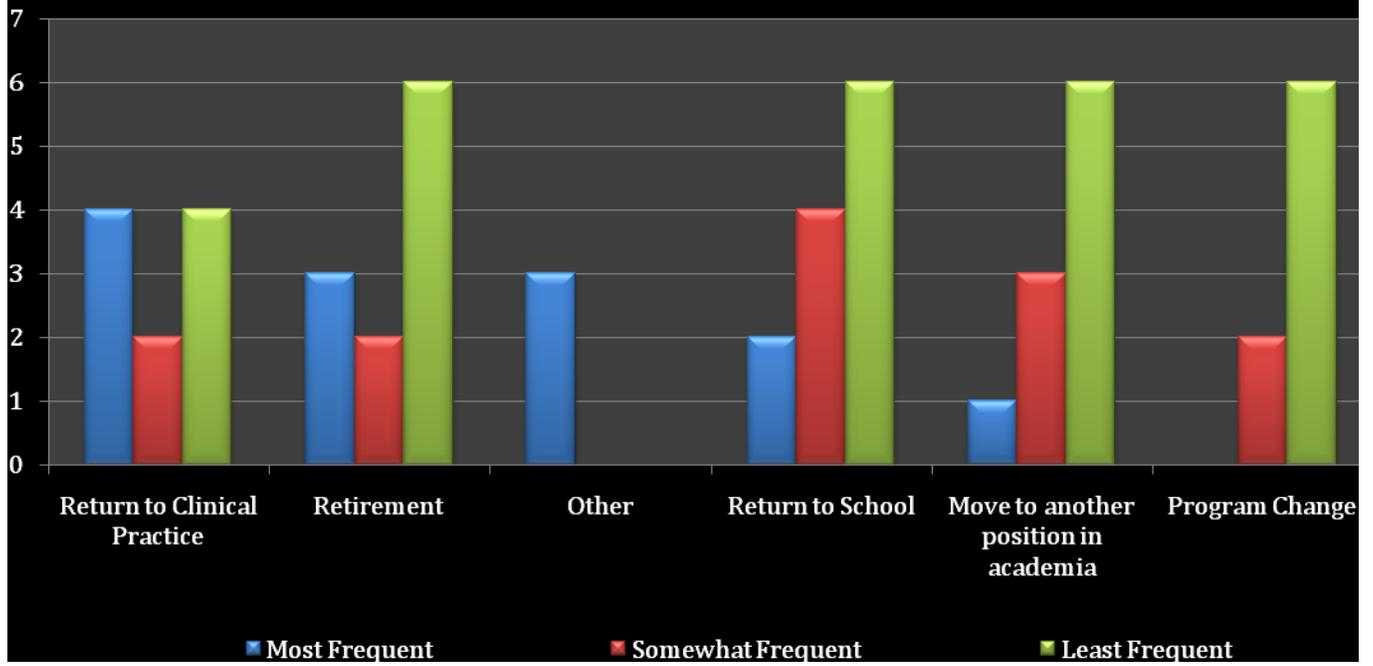
All programs experienced less than projected enrollments. Student enrollments are projected to increase among RN and PN programs by academic year 2011-2012. Projected student enrollment data are shown in *Table 3*, (Appendix I).

Factors contributing to nursing faculty vacancies

Return to clinical practice was rated as the factor most frequently contributing to pending RN and PN faculty vacancies according to 10 (31%) of survey respondents. RN survey respondents rated moving to another position in academia as contributing to pending RN vacancies just as much as returning to clinical practice.

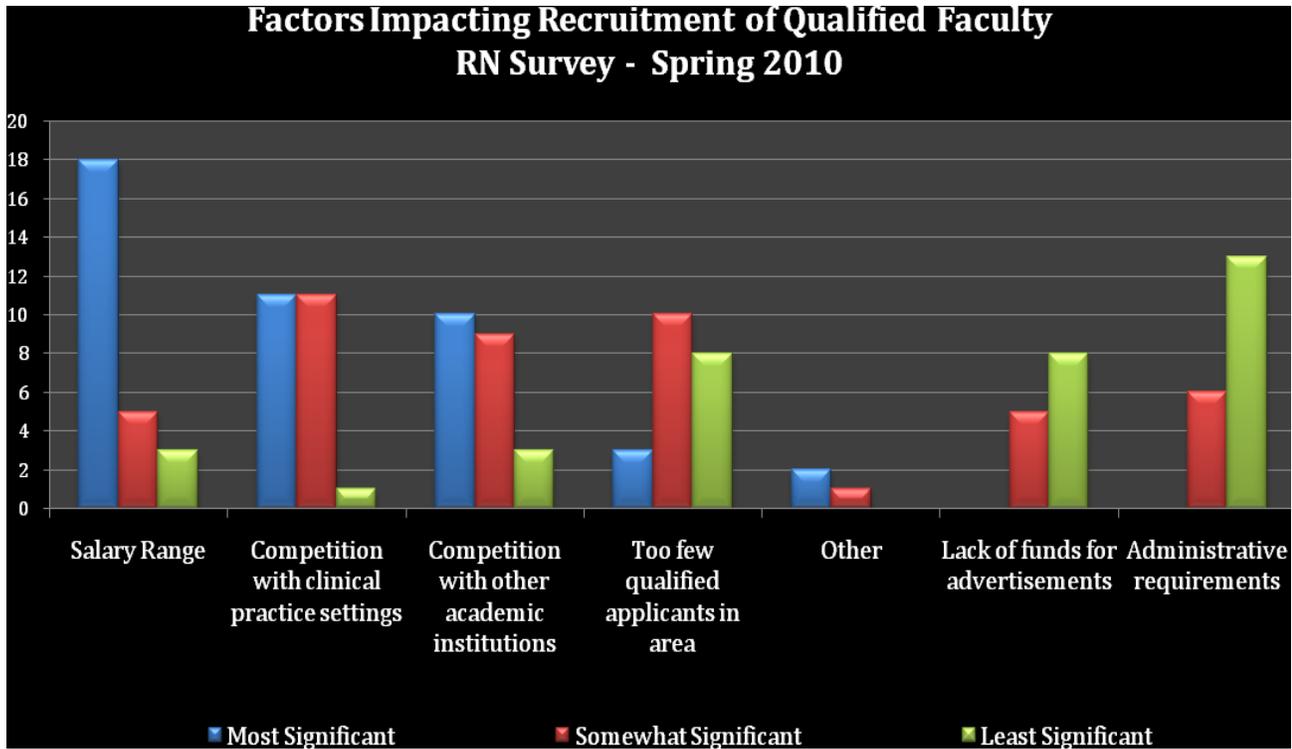


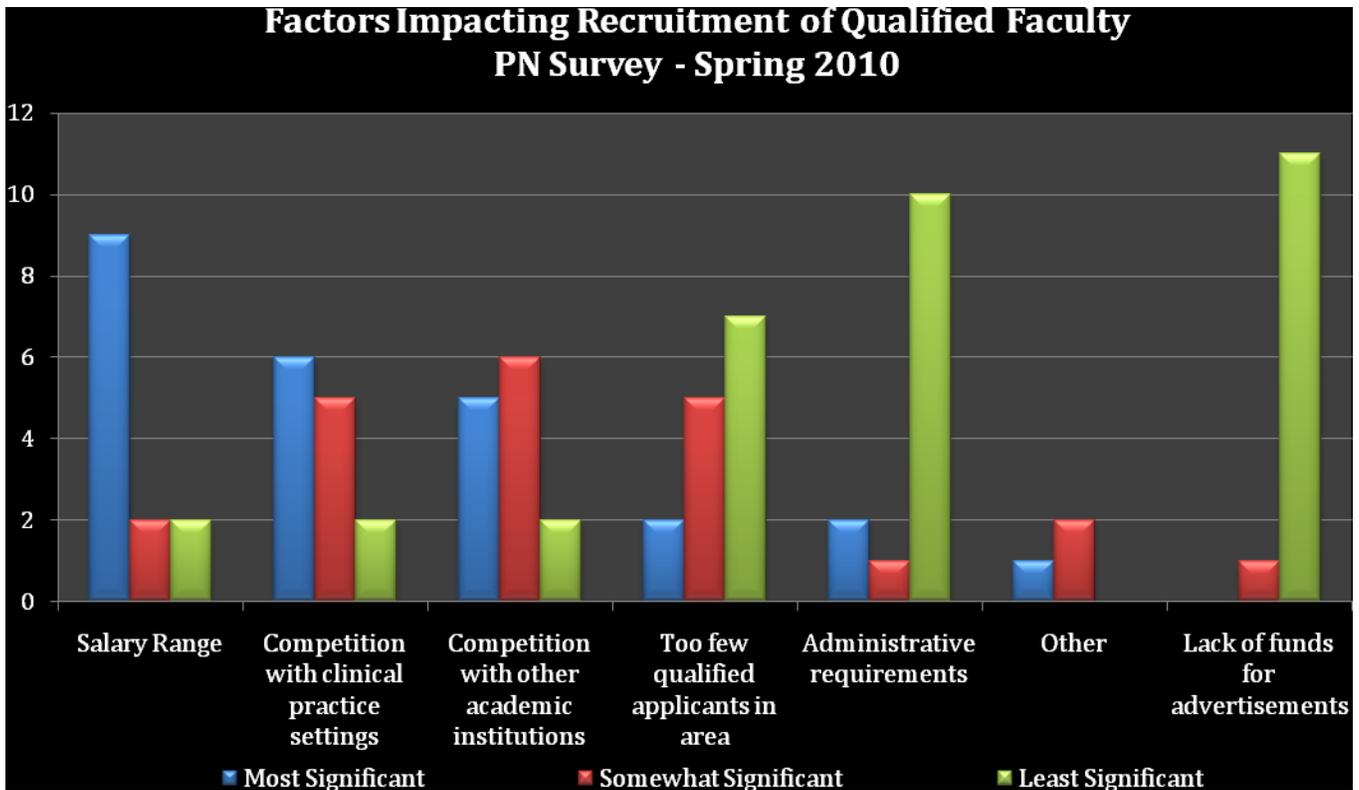
Frequency of Factors Contributing to Faculty Vacancy PN Survey - Spring 2010



Factors impacting recruitment of qualified nursing faculty

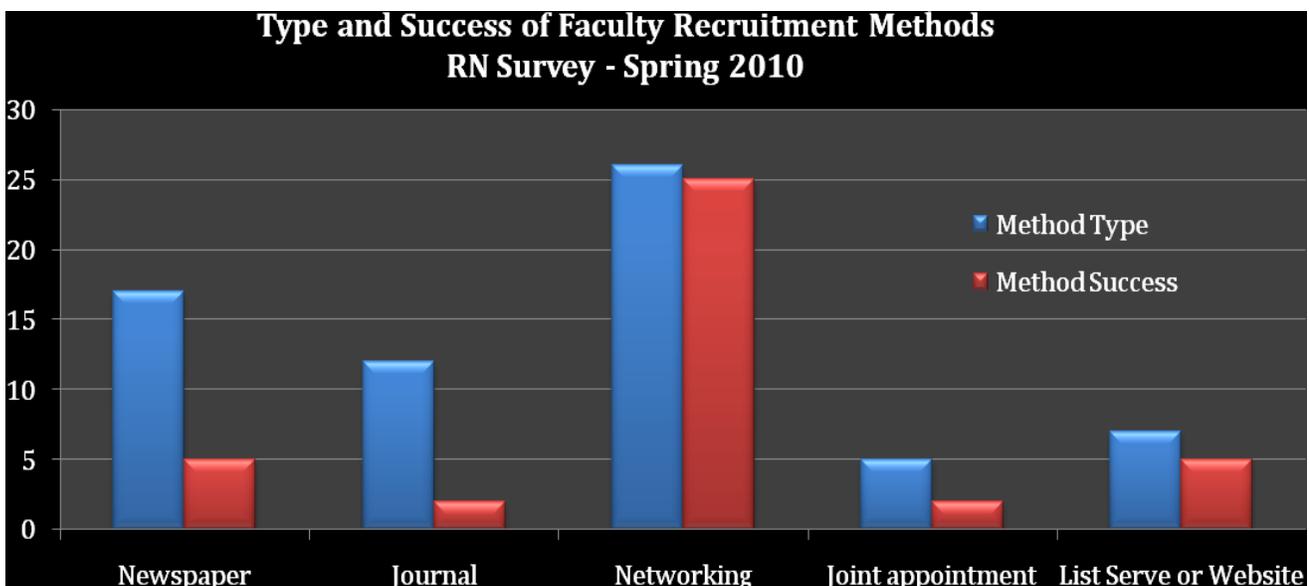
All program types rated salary range as having the greatest overall impact on the program's ability to recruit qualified faculty. Responses by the RN programs indicate that salary range had a 41% rate of impact compared to the PN programs which rated this factor at 36%. All programs rated competition with clinical practice settings as the second greatest factor impacting the recruitment of qualified faculty (25%).

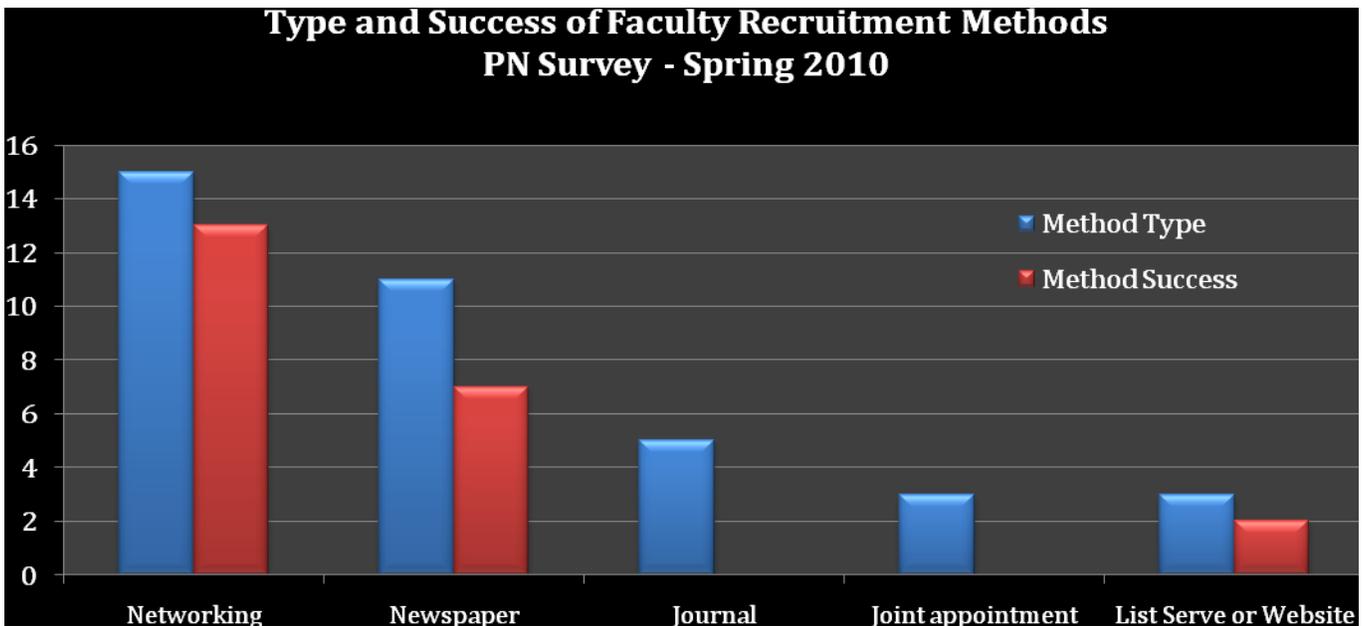




Successful nursing faculty recruitment methods

Networking continues to be both the preferred method for recruitment and the most successful among RN and PN programs. Websites/List serves are not a very preferred type of recruitment for either the RN or PN programs but when used they are successful in comparison.





FTE, laboratory, and clinical faculty vacancies filled in the last twelve months

A total of 58 FTE vacancies were filled by qualified faculty in the last 12 months among RN programs, including 47 FTE vacancies in the baccalaureate programs and 11 in the hospital-based and associate degree programs. Among the PN programs, a total of 7.35 FTE vacancies were filled by qualified faculty in the last 12 months.

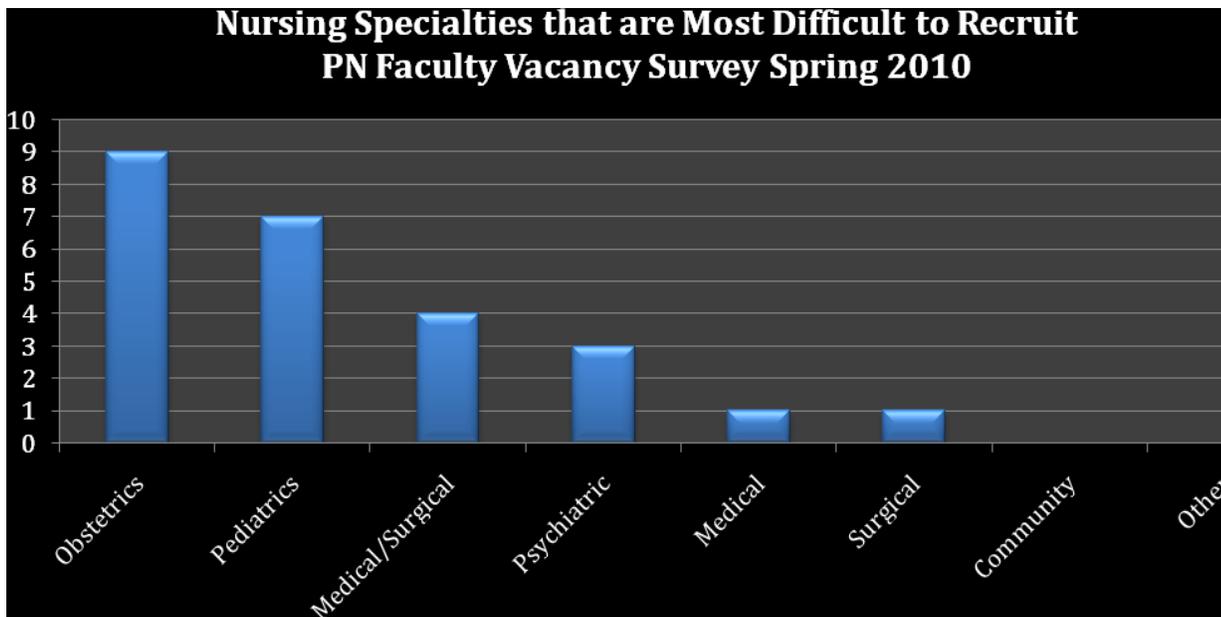
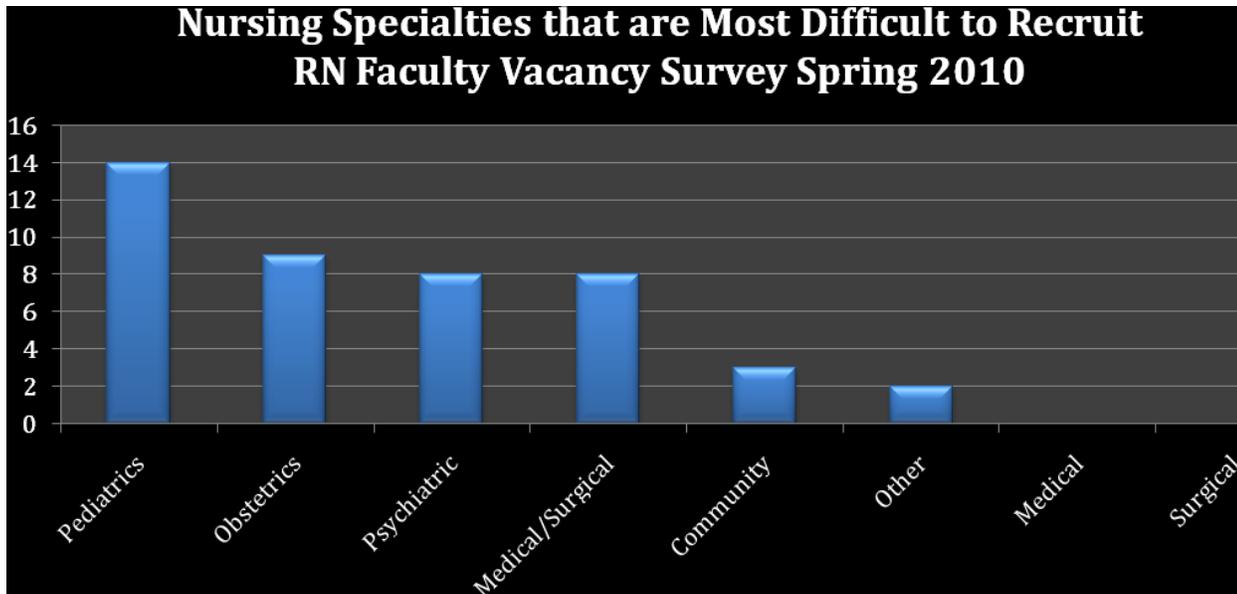
A total of 316 RN skills laboratory and clinical positions were filled by qualified faculty in the last 12 months, including 242 in the baccalaureate programs and 74 in the hospital-based and associate degree programs. A total of 8.25 PN vacant skills laboratory and clinical positions were filled by qualified faculty in the last 12 months.

Nursing faculty salaries

All RN and PN program respondents reported full-time faculty positions as salaried. While responding to questions regarding salary classification, some respondents did not provide specific salary information. Salaries for part-time faculty were either salaried, per course, per credit, or hourly. Comparison with part-time faculty salaries is difficult due to the inconsistencies. Faculty salary data for full-time salaried employees is shown in Table 4, (Appendix I).

Clinical faculty specialties that are difficult to recruit

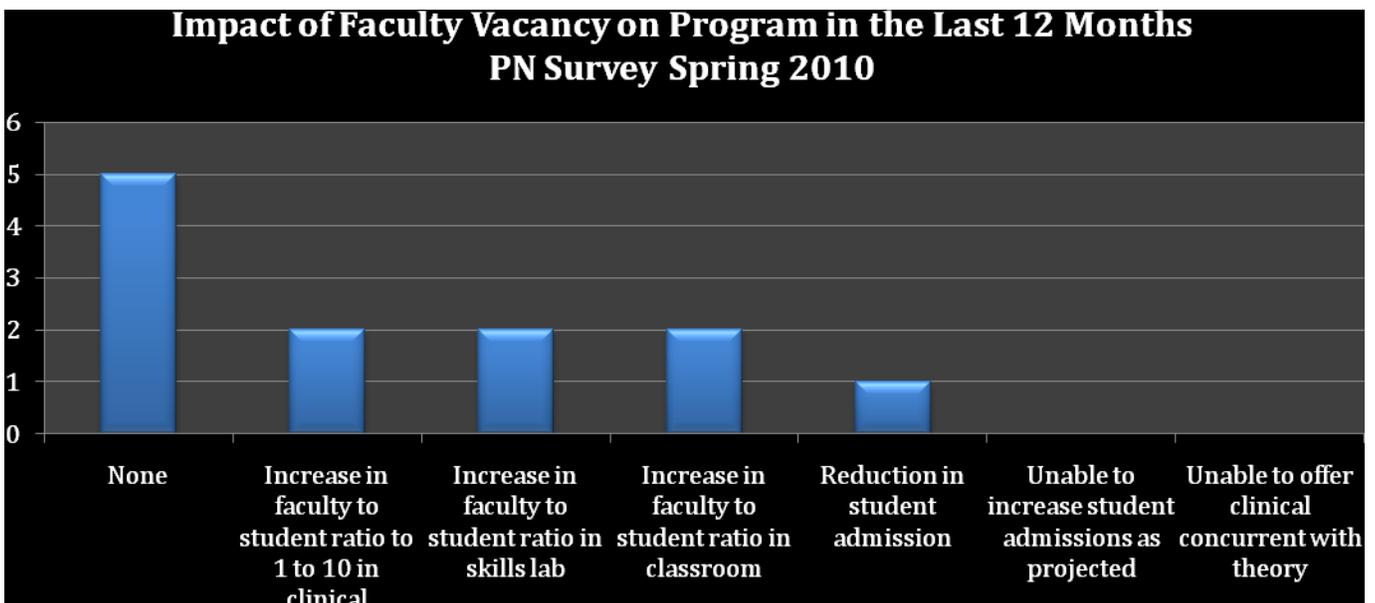
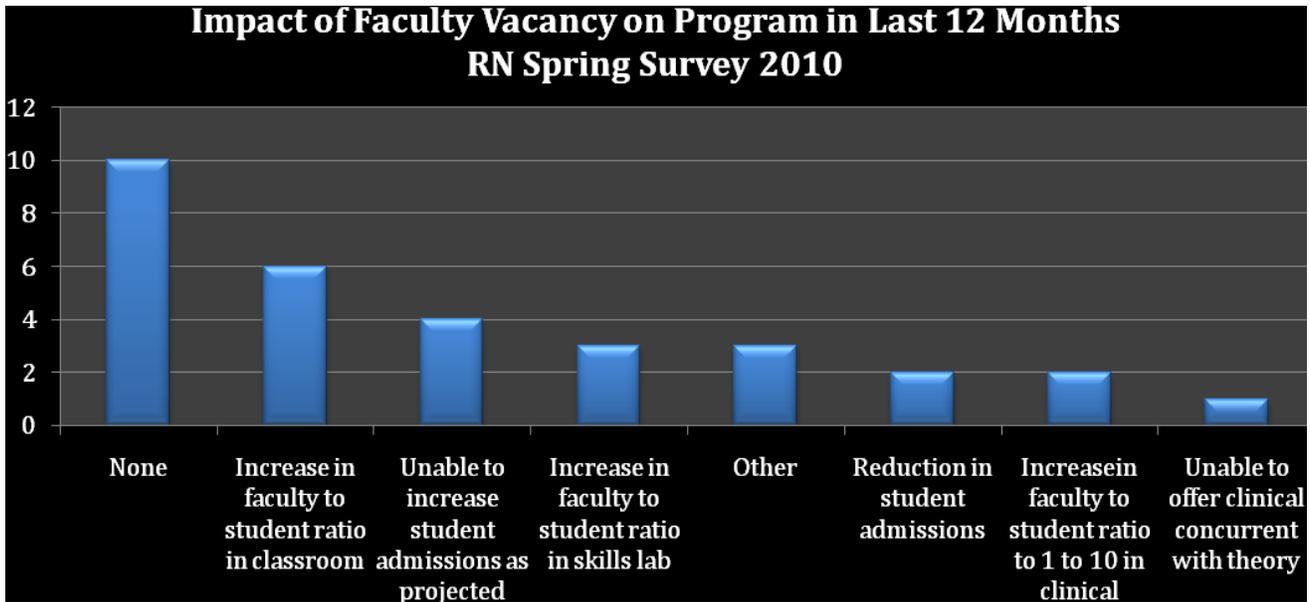
The RN program respondents ranked pediatrics as the most difficult clinical specialty to recruit qualified faculty to teach, followed by obstetrics. The PN program respondents reported obstetrics as the most difficult clinical specialty to recruit qualified faculty to teach, followed by pediatrics.



Impact of nursing faculty vacancies on program in last twelve months

Thirty-two percent (32%) of RN program respondents reported that, of the given options, none of these had an impact of the nursing faculty vacancies in the last 12 months. An increase in the faculty to student ratio in the classroom was the response that had the most impact among RN program respondents (19%).

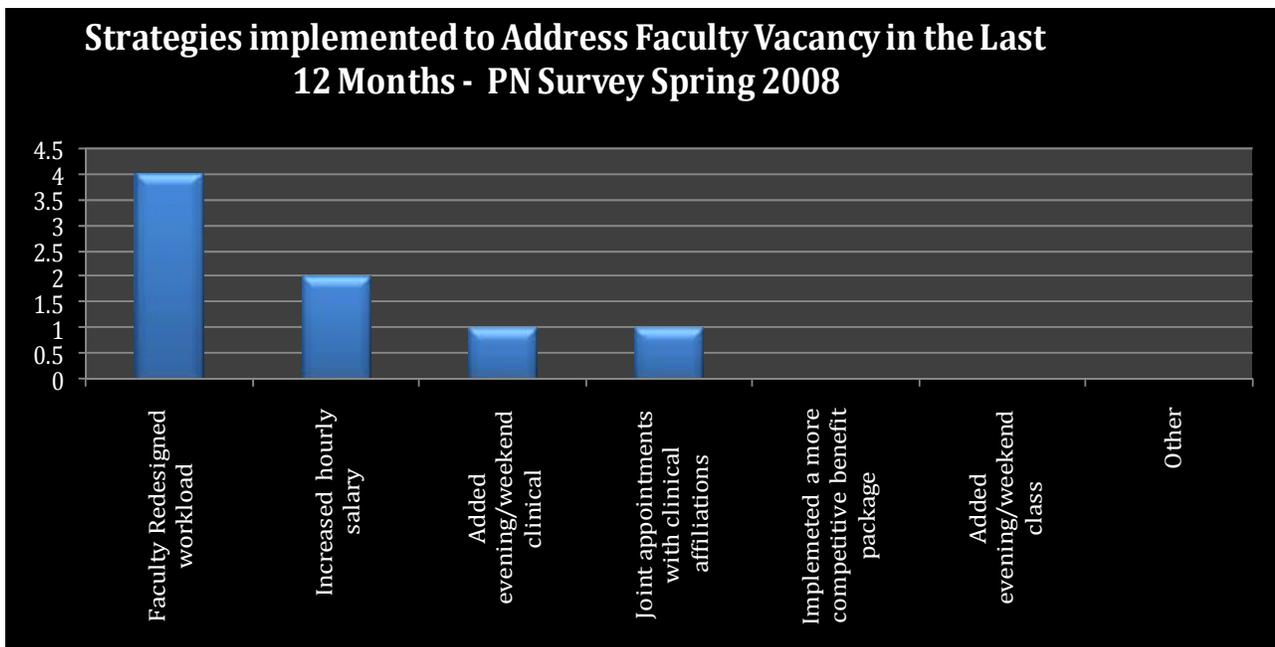
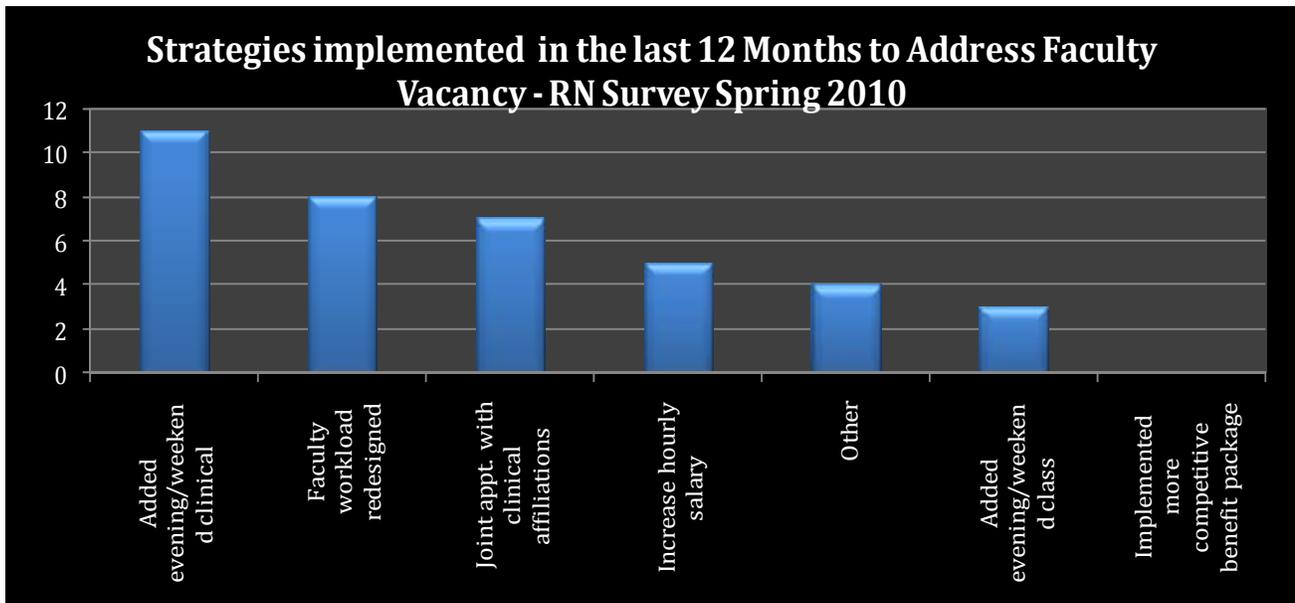
Forty-two percent (42%) of PN program respondents also reported that not any of the given had an impact on the program in the last 12 months. An increase in the faculty to student ratio to 1:10 in the clinical setting was the response that had the most impact among the PN program respondents (17%).



Strategies implemented by program in last twelve months to address vacancies

Twenty-nine percent (29%) of all RN program respondents report adding a weekend/evening clinical as the strategy most frequently implemented to address faculty vacancies in the last 12 months, followed by faculty work redesign (21%). The only strategy RN program respondents did not report using was the implementation of a more competitive benefit package.

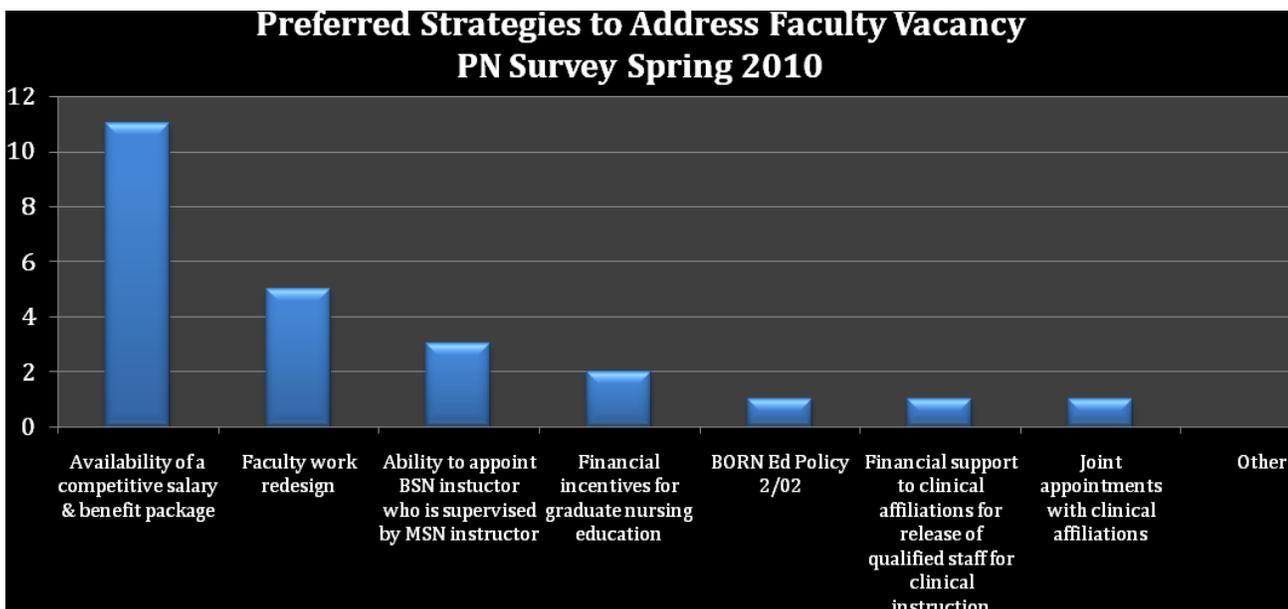
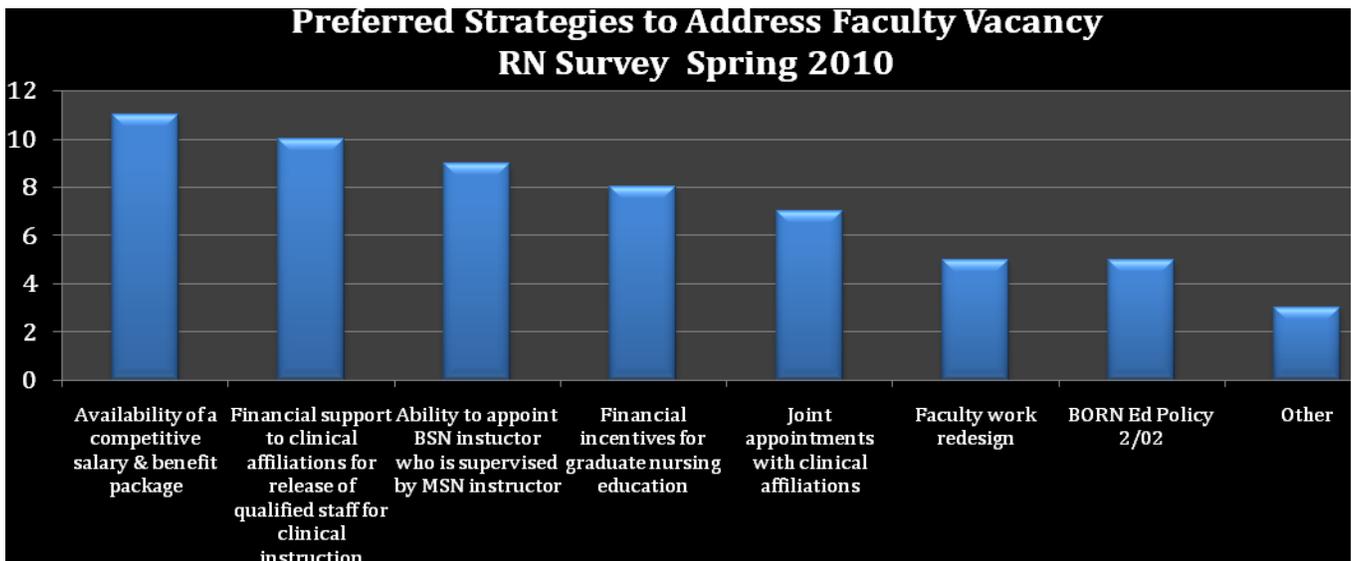
The response rate was low for the PN program respondents but of those responding, 50% reported faculty work design as the strategy most implemented in the last 12 months to address faculty vacancies.



Preferred strategies to address nursing faculty vacancies and assure preparation of graduates for safe, competent entry-level practice

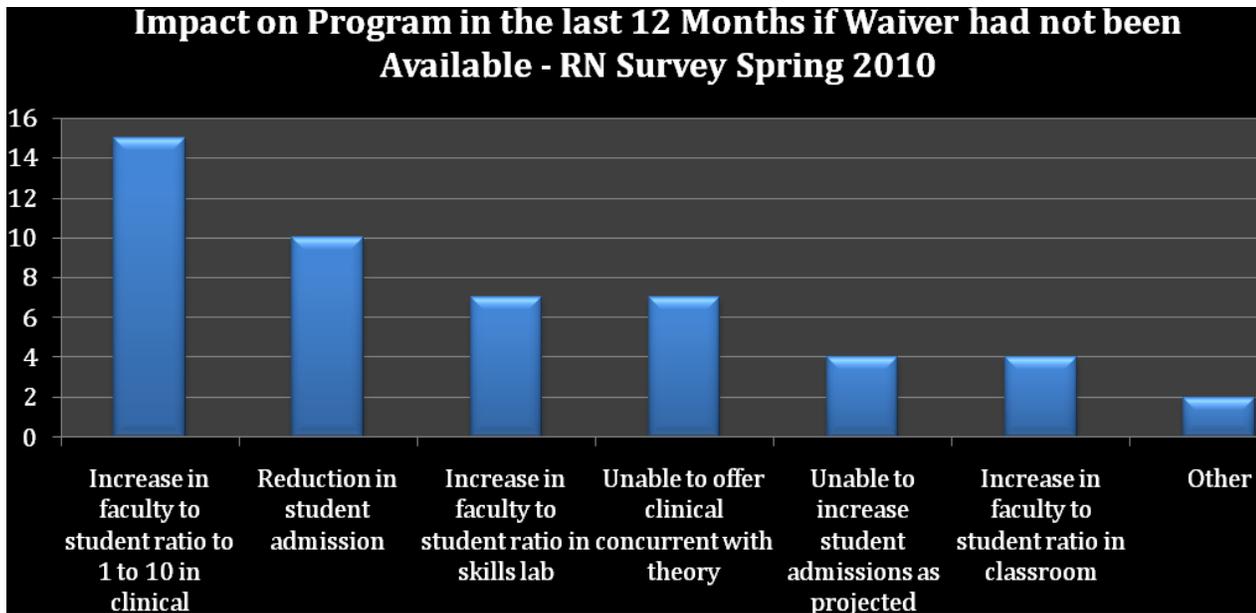
As was reported in 2006 and 2008, the availability of a competitive salary and benefit package to offer faculty applicants was cited by as the preferred strategy to address faculty vacancies and to assure the preparation of graduates for safe, competent, entry-level practice by RN and PN program respondents (n=22). The financial support to clinical affiliations for release of qualified staff for clinical instruction was ranked second by RN programs.

Strategies identified by the PN programs as preferred, following availability of competitive salary and benefit package, included faculty work redesign and the ability to appoint an otherwise qualified instructor who holds a baccalaureate degree in nursing as a clinical or laboratory instructor with supervision by a masters prepared instructor.



Use of 244 CMR 6.04(2)(b) 3 waiver in the last twelve months (RN programs only)

The use of the waiver allowed 203 vacant clinical and laboratory positions to be filled. Had the waiver not been available, 31% of RN program survey respondents identified an increase in faculty to student ratio to 1 to 10 would have potentially occurred.



Nursing program respondent comments

Respondents were provided an opportunity to submit written comments at the conclusion of the survey; these comments can be found in Appendix II.

In collaboration with Judith M. Pelletier, MSN, RN, Nursing Education Coordinator, this report was prepared by Alyson Prokop, BSN, RN and presented to the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing on June 8, 2011.

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Appendix I

Table 1. Number of survey respondents.

	# BRN-approved institutions	# Responding	Response Rate	# of total respondents publicly funded	% of total respondents publicly funded
Practical Nurse (PN)	24	15	81%	14	93%
Diploma/Associate degree	21	11	52%	9	82%
Baccalaureate and higher degree	20	14	70%	4	29%
Total Registered Nurse (RN)	41	25	61%	13	52%
Total PN and RN	65	40	62%	27	68%

Table 2. Actual and projected total budgeted nursing faculty FTEs.

	2009-2010			2010-2011	2011-2012
	Filled FTEs	Vacant FTEs	% Vacancy	Anticipated Vacant FTEs #/%	Anticipated Vacant FTEs #/%
Practical Nurse (PN)	72.7	0.3	0.4%	5.5/7.5%	4/5.5%
Diploma/Assoc Degree RN	125	5	3.8%	4.8/3.7%	4.5/3.5%
Baccalaureate & Higher Degree RN	410.95	15	3.5%	20/4.6%	8/1.8%
Total Registered Nurse (RN)	535.95	20	3.7%	24.8/4.5%	12.5/2.2%
Total PN and RN	608.65	20.3	3.3%	30.3/4.8%	16.5/2.6%

Table 3. Actual and projected nursing student enrollments [*the number in () is the projected enrollment for 2009-2010 as reported Spring 2008*].

Practical Nurse Programs			Diploma/Associate Degree RN Programs			Baccalaureate and Higher Degree RN Programs			All Registered Nurse Programs		
09-10	10-11	11-12	09-10	10-11	11-12	09-10	10-11	11-12	09-10	10-11	11-12
637	715	761	1944	1941	1987	6655	6642	6721	8599	8583	8708

Table 4. Full-time salaried nursing faculty positions among all survey respondents 2010.

	Average salary	Average salary range	
		Reporting Low	Reporting High
Practical Nurse programs	\$65,061.25 (N=15)	\$37,000.00	\$154,322.00
Diploma/Associate degree RN programs	\$50,363.71(N=11)	\$42,000.00	\$91,593.00
Baccalaureate/Higher degree RN programs	\$70,480.32 (N=14)	\$40,938.00	\$93,000.00

Appendix II

FACULTY VACANCIES AMONG BOARD-APPROVED NURSING EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN MASSACHUSETTS

2010

Survey Respondent Comments

Practical Nurse Programs

PN-1: New faculty need many resources to assist them as well as faculty mentors to guide and encourage them in their new educator role. Time must be taken to assist new faculty in test construction and analysis, clinical management of student nurses, documentation of student's progress and remediation, and teaching strategies in the classroom.

PN-2: None at this time

PN-3: Our program has been very stable in terms of faculty. We have used one or two adjunct clinical instructors to accommodate increase in part-time program enrollment. I anticipate no change in the next one to two years.

PN-4: None at this time

PN-5: We just finished interviewing four applicants for a full-time vacancy that has just occurred. We were happy to have four good, qualified applicants in this geographic area which is less populated than other parts of the state. DESE vocational teacher licensure requirements were a concern to some applicants.

PN-6: None at this time

PN-7: None at this time

PN-8: None at this time

PN-9: There are more proprietary schools/ private institutions attempting to open LPN programs in a state that already has twenty six PN programs. Established programs are already in competition for clinical sites and faculty. I believe that the board should continue to diligently review these requests, in light of this, before approving initial applications.

PN-10: Our evening program is staffed by part-time faculty who hold full-time positions within the agency/college. All meet requirements and waivers are not necessary.

PN-11: Student enrollments increased by eight as a result of our new curriculum. No other increases in enrollments are anticipated through 2012.

PN-12: None at this time

PN-13: None at this time

PN-14: None at this time

PN-15: None at this time

Hospital-based/Associate degree programs

AD-1: None at this time

AD-2: None at this time

AD-3: The changes in student enrollment were as a result of the implementation of our new curriculum in the fall of 2009. 2009-2010 reflects enrollments with the last of the evening students. 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 reflect projected enrollment based upon the new curriculum.

AD-4: Finding qualified faculty, particularly for full-time positions, is difficult because of the limited pool of qualified faculty and the financial constraints of the salary range available to new faculty. This makes it difficult to compete with other (private) schools and practice, especially in the current financial situation. Of the four full-time faculty who have left in the past two years, one retired, one returned to practice, and two left for higher paying education positions.

Being able to hire adjunct faculty under the 244 CMR 6.04(2)(b) 3 waiver has allowed us to encourage new faculty to continue their education and obtain a masters in nursing. Six of the twelve adjunct faculty currently working here who were hired under the waiver policy have enrolled in or completed a masters program in the past four years.

AD-5: None at this time

AD-6: None at this time

AD-7: Our faculty all have to teach either in a specialty plus fundamentals or in Medical/Surgical Nursing. We do not have specified practice category positions but, of course, review the department needs when hiring new faculty.

Increase in student numbers due to better retention not increased enrollment.

AD-8: None at this time

AD-9: It was less difficult this year to retain and recruit new clinical instructors. Perhaps the economy has played a role in the increase an interest in clinical instruction.

I am very concerned that we will have a large number of retirements in the next three to five years.

AD-10: None at this time

AD-11: None at this time

Baccalaureate and higher degree programs

BS-1: None at this time

BS-2: None at this time

BS-3: None at this time

BS-4: None at this time

BS-5: The college will not grant enough full-time tenure so we need to continually hire adjuncts. This does put strain on the operation of the department. The college is willing to negotiate salary but this is in comparison to other faculty salaries and not what nurses are receiving in clinical practice. We do not need the waivers for baccalaureate prepared qualified clinical adjuncts who are not masters prepared but having this option available is important.

BS-6: None at this time

BS-7: None at this time

BS-8: None at this time

BS-9: I am so grateful that the board changed the policy related to the expiration of waivers for clinical faculty holding a BSN who have not pursued a master's degree. We were at risk of loosing a number of nurses who are clinical experts and have grown so well into the clinical instructor role.

BS-10: None at this time

BS-11: None at this time

BS-12: In the past year, there have been more spontaneous inquires for faculty positions. My program has increased salaries because we identified lower salaries as the biggest obstacle to recruiting faculty. We are also paying for graduate education for master's and doctoral degrees.

BS-13: None at this time

BS-14: None at this time

BS-15: None at this time