



# The University of North Carolina

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT


POST OFFICE BOX 2688, CHAPEL HILL, NC 27515-2688

Alan R. Mabe, *Vice President for Academic Planning*

Telephone: (919) 962-4589 • Fax: (919) 962-7139 • E-mail: mabe@northcarolina.edu

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Board of Governors Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs

FROM: Alan Mabe 

DATE: March 8, 2005

SUBJECT: UNC Nursing Exam Results for 2004 and Nursing Enrollment and Degrees Conferred Report

### UNC Board of Governors' Policy and Annual Reporting Requirements

In May 1990, the University of North Carolina Board of Governors adopted the following policy and performance standards for UNC nursing programs:

A requirement that the President will consider, jointly with the chancellor, an evaluation of the leadership, faculty, admissions policies, and the curriculum of any program whose graduates do not achieve for two consecutive years an annual passing rate of 85% for first-time writers, and a requirement that the President will ask the Board to initiate program termination procedures for any program having a first-time passing rate of less than 75% for two consecutive years.

The passing standard for the NCLEX-RN Exam was revised upward in 2004. Nationally, the pass rate for all RNs dropped from an average of 87% in 2003 to an average of 85% in 2004. The statewide pass rate in North Carolina for all RNs dropped from 90% to 86%.

This report on enrollment and licensure for the UNC nursing programs is prepared annually in accord with this Board policy. The UNC nursing students who took the NCLEX-RN exam for the first time in 2004 passed at an average rate of 85%. Two UNC campuses had passing rates above 95% (UNC CH, and WSSU). Three campuses have fallen below 85% for two consecutive years (ECU, NCA&T, and NCCU), thus are below the BOG two-year standard. North Carolina A&T State University has fallen below the BOG standard for five consecutive years, while North Carolina Central University has been below the BOG standard for three consecutive years. For 2003, NCA&T had a passing rate of 75% and for 2004, 81%.

Appalachian State University

East Carolina University

Elizabeth City State University

Fayetteville State University

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University

North Carolina Central University

North Carolina School of the Arts

North Carolina State University at Raleigh

University of North Carolina at Asheville

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

University of North Carolina at Charlotte

University of North Carolina at Greensboro

University of North Carolina at Pembroke

University of North Carolina at Wilmington

Western Carolina University

Winston-Salem State University

An Equal Opportunity/  
Affirmative Action  
Employer

For 2003, NCCU had a passing rate of 81% and for 2004, 65%. East Carolina University fell below the BOG standard for the first time in recent years in 2003 and 2004 with 81% and 83% respectively.

In addition to NCCU, UNC Charlotte and UNC Wilmington fell below the standard for the Board of Nursing (75%) with passing scores respectively of 72% and 74%. UNC Greensboro had a passing rate of 80%. Western Carolina University improved from 71% in 2003 to 88% in 2004.

***North Carolina A&T State University.*** NCA&T has been below the Board standard for five consecutive years. Steps were previously initiated to assist the campus in reversing this trend. A team of consultants visited the campus in the summer of 2002 and prepared a report on steps for improving performance. The campus reviewed the report and reported it was implementing the recommendations. NCA&T reported on their efforts to the Office of the President on July 1 and December 30 of 2003. After the 2003 scores were made available, the Office of the President asked the campus to go through a process of collecting information from faculty about the program and its organization and leadership. This resulted in a discussion involving the Provost and the Dean of Nursing with the Office of the President regarding steps to be taken to improve the program and student performance. NCA&T provided a report in August 2004 on their internal review of the program and their use of two external consultants, Dr. Pamela Hammond, Dean of the School of Nursing at Hampton University, and Dr. Mary Ellen Graham of the School of Nursing at Tennessee State University. This report was updated in January 2005, following a conference call with the Office of the President in December 2004. The program plans to evaluate students more carefully and not readmit weak students who do not have a very good chance of success. At the same time, the program plans to increase the standards for the program and build extra assistance for students into the program to help all the admitted students be successful. More time is being spent in helping the faculty understand what is required for the NCLEX-RN exam, and a greater effort will be made to make sure those requirements are integrated into the course work. Curriculum changes will be made in response to recommendations regarding specific courses such as pharmacology and the medical-surgical course. The program did comment that many students who fail the first time do pass NCLEX-RN subsequently. Even though there is improvement in a year in which the test passing standard was increased, the Office of the President will again ask the campus to do a review and monitor developments.

***North Carolina Central University.*** NCCU has been out of compliance with the Board standard for three consecutive years. After the 2002 report to the BOG, the Chancellor and the Provost at NCCU were contacted about a follow-up to the report. The options suggested by the Office of the President were to have another review by

an outside team, or have an internal committee review the last report and determine whether its recommendations were continuing to be followed, since after the previous report passing rates improved significantly. There was no substantive response to this request, and on March 17, 2004 the Office of the President received a letter from then Provost Reuben indicating some steps that had been taken, and also indicating that a letter had been drafted in August 2003 but apparently had not been sent. In April 2004 following the report on the 2003 passing rates, a letter was sent from the Office of the President requesting a thorough review, including a review by the faculty and the Provost. NCCU arranged for a two-day site visit in September 2004 by Dr. Inez Tuck of the School of Nursing, Virginia Commonwealth University, who provided a written assessment of the program. In November 2004, NCCU provided information about the faculty review of the program along with the consultant's report. The then Provost left the position before a follow-up meeting could be arranged. The Interim Provost has been contacted to follow up with previous reviews and to address next steps to respond to the 2004 passing rates.

***East Carolina University.*** Even though ECU has now been below the 85% requirement for two years, its 2004 numbers improved over the 2003 rates. ECU will be asked to do an internal review and depending on that review take additional steps to improve passing rates of its students and report back to the Office of the President.

Programs falling below 75% are put on notice that they are out of compliance and their approval status is changed to approval with stipulations by the North Carolina Board of Nursing (BON). Three of the programs fall into that category: NCCU, UNCC, and UNCW. These programs are required to respond to the BON regarding their plans for improving passing rates. The Office of the President will monitor those responses and request additional steps where needed.

It should be noted that nursing graduates can retake the NCLEX-RN. For 2004, another 123 students passed the exam on a subsequent sitting for the exam. So in addition to the 635 who passed on the first sitting, another 123 passed for a total of 758 new RNs produced by UNC institution in 2004.

North Carolina has 63 nursing programs that train Registered Nurses. This includes 9 UNC baccalaureate programs (with two new programs at FSU and UNCP starting in 2005), 44 associate degree programs offered by the North Carolina Community College System, 4 private baccalaureate programs, 3 independent ADN and 3 hospital-based diploma programs. UNC also has had a joint RN to BSN only nursing program offered by Fayetteville State University and the University of North Carolina at Pembroke that provides access to baccalaureate education for the graduates of eleven community college nursing programs in the southeastern region

of the State. The joint program will merge with the respective campuses' new degree programs in nursing. According to the North Carolina Board of Nursing, the total number of first-time test takers from all sixty-three of North Carolina's programs was 2,831 in 2004. The total number of first-time takers of the exam from UNC programs increased from 655 in 2003 to 749 in 2004.

### **UNC Nursing Enrollment**

The baccalaureate nursing enrollment increased from 2,303 students in fall 2003 to 2,571 students in fall 2004. Only upper-division majors are included in the data. Campuses have approximately 1,000 additional lower-division students taking pre-nursing courses and planning to be majors. UNC nursing schools and departments currently offer RN to BSN distance learning programs at sites throughout the State. Some nursing courses are also offered via the Internet and through interactive video. The number of students enrolled in master's programs increased from 794 to 923 from 2003 to 2004, a sizable increase. The number of nursing students enrolled in a doctoral program reached a new high of 66 (51 at UNC Chapel Hill and 15 at East Carolina, which opened its new doctoral program in the fall of 2002). UNCG has been approved to establish a new doctoral program in nursing. UNC graduate programs prepare advanced practice practitioners, nursing specialists, nursing scientists, health administrators, and nursing faculty for the UNC and community college programs. Overall, enrollment in UNC nursing programs increased by over 12% for fall 2004.

### **UNC Nursing Degrees Conferred**

Over the past ten years, the UNC nursing programs have been responsive to the needs of the state by expanding offerings and increasing capacity as much as possible in programs that have clinical requirements and mandated faculty/student ratios for licensure approval and accreditation. Since 1990 baccalaureate and master's degree production more than doubled. In this decade there has been a slight decline in baccalaureate degrees awarded but that has now turned around. For 2003-04 there were 1,076 baccalaureate degrees awarded. The significant increase in enrollment should lead to further increases in graduates in future years.

### **Expanding Nursing Education in UNC**

The North Carolina Institute of Medicine issued its report on Nursing, *Task Force on the North Carolina Nursing Workforce Report*, in May 2004. The Board established a Committee on the Future of Nursing which made its report to the Board in November 2004. Both reports document the need for increasing the number of nurses in North Carolina and increasing the educational level of nurses. UNC campuses are well along in developing enrollment expansion plans to achieve the

ambitious goals approved by the Board of Governors to increase the production of nurses at every level.

The Office of the President has used its distance learning revolving fund to support the development of distance and online nursing programs to expand access to nursing programs. The fund has supported both ECU's and UNCG's online master's program in Nursing Education. Preparing more faculty through these and others programs will be a key to supporting the expansion of community college nursing programs. UNC also participated in Project HEALTH with the North Carolina Community College System and the NC Department of Commerce. Project HEALTH was supported by a US Department of Labor grant of \$1.5 million supplemented by the Commerce Department for a total of \$1.6 million. Half of these funds were used for scholarship for UNC master's students in Nursing Education and for current community college faculty to upgrade their credentials. This program is supporting over 20 graduate students who have agreed to be faculty members in community college nursing programs.

#### Attachments

cc: Senior Vice President Gretchen M. Bataille  
UNC Nursing Deans

# Nursing Degree Credit Headcount Enrollment and Degrees Conferred, 1992 - 2004

Year	ECU			FSU*		NCA&T		NCCU		UNC-CH			UNC-C			UNC-G			UNC-P*			UNC-W			WCU			WSSU			UNC Total		
	B	M	D	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	M	D	B	M	B	M	B	M	B	B	M	B	B	M	B	B	M	B	M	D			
Enrollment																																	
1992	326	104				145		126		301	112	33	285	141		276	264				110			119			217			1,905	621	33	
1993	381	164			20	185		157		271	108	36	256	146		305	301		17		127			119			298			2,136	719	36	
1994	421	134			19	217		134		279	147	34	239	157		315	279		32		121			129			278			2,184	717	34	
1995	537	137			28	240		133		283	177	32	246	143		332	273		41		145			131			279			2,395	730	32	
1996	478	125			24	210		143		318	166	30	212	144		217	80		38		161			151			295			2,247	515	30	
1997	423	102			28	163		163		305	146	27	173	161		319	230		47		165			149			362			2,297	639	27	
1998	432	121			44	155		157		295	169	36	234	149		355	243		58		162	20		157			252			2,301	702	36	
1999	437	92			35	139		126		300	141	39	217	159		371	290		49		150	28		137	30		270			2,231	740	39	
2000	450	105			26	137		140		297	151	42	191	152		341	307		56		137	30		122	27		212			2,109	772	42	
2001	420	92			17	153		113		334	168	50	218	172		289	238		52		127	25		116	41		216			2,055	736	50	
2002	382	73	2		28	176		95		307	158	51	216	174		295	240		31		122	19		119	15		201			1,972	679	53	
2003	483	123	10		23	220		91		311	148	52	224	176		323	247		44		132	21		67	29		385		50	2,303	794	62	
2004	497	211	15		49	220		134		328	162	51	206	172		314	258		54		151	19		133	41		485		60	2,571	923	66	
Degrees Conferred																																	
1991-92	117	24			44			17		131	31		127	30		119	42				40			65			108			728	127		
1992-93	160	20			56			43		159	29		134	24		128	67				49			58			140			878	140		
1993-94	155	40			50			38		151	36	2	133	29		142	91		0		71			58			151			888	196	2	
1994-95	184	29			61			74		129	39	2	107	52		121	79		7		50			61			165			922	199	2	
1995-96	177	38			90			54		144	42	5	117	33		143	91		13		75			68			162			979	204	5	
1996-97	226	52			65			66		151	68	7	129	37		149	85		12		60			74			173			1,058	242	7	
1997-98	163	27			60			99		164	35	3	87	42		140	59		11		74	0		63			200			1,073	163	3	
1998-99	180	43			61			72		142	78	3	123	31		149	64		33		73	0		79	0		185			1,115	216	3	
1999-00	209	28			49			52		151	50	7	127	63		145	51		20		71	9		75	0		193			1,109	201	7	
2000-01	202	33			39			59		151	53	2	110	48		155	107		18		64	12		71	0		130			1,017	253	2	
2001-02	222	31	0		63			56		152	54	6	107	53		130	89		30		65	10		64	0		143			1,042	237	6	
2002-03	159	31	0		55			47		170	62	7	143	54		116	18**		17		47	7		67	23		150		0	976	195	7	
2003-04	183	15	0		47			54		166	50	8	142	60		153	121		26		65	6		53	0		181		0	1,076	252	8	

UNC-GA ProgAssess/Hlth.A.T002B.U/2-21-05  
 B = Bachelor's Degree  
 M = Master's Degree  
 D = Doctorate Degree  
 Master's level at UNC-G includes post-master's degrees beginning in 1993.  
 Enrollment: Upper-division undergraduate & postbaccalaureate enrollment in the fall of each year.  
 Degrees Conferred: Degrees conferred July 1 through June 30 of each year.

\*Joint RN to BSN program.

\*\* Forty-nine (49) unreported degree recipients in 2002-03 are included in 2003-2004 reporting cycle.

**The University of North Carolina Nursing Examination (NCLEX-RN) Results, 1986 to 2004 (First-Time Writers Only)**

	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
<b>East Carolina</b>																			
Number of Write	100	86	83	71	61	70	88	130	117	131	136	165	111	127	120	147	165	134	161
Number Passed	92	65	51	67	61	64	85	118	106	126	115	153	104	118	109	136	160	109	134
% Passed	92%	76%	61%	94%	100%	91%	97%	91%	91%	96%	85%	93%	94%	93%	91%	93%	97%	81%	83%
<b>N.C. A and T</b>																			
Number of Write	5	10	8	8	7	11	31	33	39	45	81	62	56	53	48	37	56	52	43
Number Passed	4	5	8	6	7	10	27	28	30	39	64	48	48	44	37	29	43	39	35
% Passed	80%	50%	100%	75%	100%	91%	87%	85%	77%	87%	79%	77%	86%	83%	77%	78%	77%	75%	81%
<b>N.C. Central</b>																			
Number of Write	24	24	16	13	6	16	9	27	17	50	31	45	49	47	32	36	38	37	37
Number Passed	21	11	14	9	5	15	9	22	14	48	28	37	39	31	30	29	31	30	24
% Passed	88%	46%	88%	69%	83%	94%	100%	81%	82%	96%	90%	82%	80%	66%	94%	81%	82%	81%	65%
<b>UNC-Chapel Hill</b>																			
Number of Write	128	116	90	78	58	84	107	117	112	110	119	114	134	123	123	134	161	160	152
Number Passed	114	101	79	71	57	78	104	104	106	107	113	109	129	110	114	126	151	149	147
% Passed	89%	87%	88%	91%	98%	93%	97%	89%	95%	97%	95%	96%	96%	89%	93%	94%	94%	93%	97%
<b>UNC-Charlotte</b>																			
Number of Write	95	77	74	74	51	75	97	120	110	101	103	105	73	77	92	71	76	83	88
Number Passed	82	67	62	62	48	69	92	96	90	96	95	95	64	71	76	67	65	74	63
% Passed	86%	87%	84%	84%	94%	92%	95%	80%	82%	95%	92%	90%	88%	92%	83%	94%	86%	89%	72%
<b>UNC-Greensboro</b>																			
Number of Write	107	91	65	83	65	73	89	85	102	79	77	91	78	95	91	84	80	75	80
Number Passed	90	67	58	65	58	67	84	75	91	76	71	88	68	85	75	77	78	71	64
% Passed	84%	74%	89%	78%	89%	92%	94%	88%	89%	96%	92%	97%	87%	89%	82%	92%	98%	95%	80%
<b>UNC-Wilmington</b>																			
Number of Write	25	10	20	15	21	21	30	38	58	47	69	51	62	45	56	54	51	38	47
Number Passed	24	10	19	15	21	20	30	37	50	46	59	45	53	38	44	49	46	34	35
% Passed	96%	100%	95%	100%	100%	95%	100%	97%	86%	98%	86%	88%	85%	84%	79%	91%	90%	89%	74%
<b>Western Carolina</b>																			
Number of Write	41	34	42	35	35	31	30	39	34	39	33	43	32	39	45	43	41	42	42
Number Passed	37	30	28	31	31	28	28	39	33	38	32	33	29	37	39	41	36	30	37
% Passed	90%	88%	67%	89%	89%	90%	93%	100%	97%	97%	97%	77%	91%	95%	87%	95%	88%	71%	88%
<b>Winston-Salem</b>																			
Number of Write	9	8	14	18	20	9	50	52	71	64	88	73	121	60	92	63	44	34	99
Number Passed	7	6	7	11	14	8	48	44	61	58	78	64	90	55	83	53	41	32	96
% Passed	78%	75%	50%	61%	70%	89%	96%	85%	86%	91%	89%	88%	74%	92%	90%	84%	93%	94%	97%
<b>Total UNC Writers</b>																			
Number of Write	534	456	412	395	324	390	531	641	660	666	737	749	716	666	699	669	712	655	749
Number Passed	471	362	326	337	302	359	507	563	581	634	655	672	624	589	607	607	651	568	635
% Passed	88%	79%	79%	85%	93%	92%	95%	88%	88%	95%	89%	90%	87%	88%	87%	91%	91%	87%	85%

UNC-GA ProgAssess/Nur.AT001.U/3-1-05

Note: Prior to 1990, figures did not include North Carolina graduates who took the exam in other states.