

THREE PARTNER COLLABORATIVE EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE, EXPERIENCE AND OUTCOMES IN RPN TO BScN EDUCATION

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AGENDA

- Who are we?
- What did we do?
- How did we do it?
- What did we find?
- How does it matter?
- Audience dialogue

RPN TO BScN PROGRAMS

- Bridging/accelerated nursing programs are the most rapidly growing educational offerings in North America
- Currently 6 universities and 10 colleges in Ontario are involved in RPN-BScN bridging education
- Virtually no evaluative data is available on these programs



WHO ARE WE?

- Collaborative BScN Program began in 2003 with UOIT in partnership with Durham College
- RPN to BScN Program began in 2005 with 35 students (F2F; one campus); integrates with Collaborative BScN Program and Health Sciences
- FT 8 semesters; PT 12 semesters
- UOIT/Durham College 7 year CASN accreditation



WHO ARE WE? (continued)

- Georgian College entered the partnership in 2009 (cohort model, offered on a campus ~ 120km away)
- Uniquely integrated with a collaborative bridging term built directly into the program
- Total of 432 students in program through 7 intakes
- Students admitted from all 23 English-speaking PN programs



WHAT DID WE DO?

In December 2011, the RPN-BScN program offered in collaboration by UOIT, DC, and GC received funding from the College-University Consortium Council (CUCC) to look at:

- Student performance in our bridging program
- Student behaviour in our bridging program
- Student experience of bridging education
- Outcomes of our bridging program for students



3 PHASE STUDY

Phase 1

Student performance

Student tracking data analysis

Student experiences

Phase 2

Creating a composite of the context of our students' lives

Facilitators and barriers to success in bridging education

Student perceptions

Phase 3

Outcomes of bridging education for graduates



HOW DID WE DO IT?

Multi-method inquiry:

- Analysis of institutional data, admission records, GPA, program completion
- Focus groups & LimeSurvey questionnaires with students, and
- Telephone interviews with employers & graduates



PHASE 1 ANALYSIS

Data Sources

Student tracking information on >400 students from 2005-2012

- Application information
- Assessment of transfer credits once admitted
- Student performance (course performance including comparison with other nursing and HLSC students, term by term and ongoing cumulative GPA)
- Length of time to program completion, attrition rates

Focus group interviews with >100 students exploring experiences within the program



PHASE 2 ANALYSIS

Online data collection with current students in spring of 2012

Quantitative data collection:

- Demographic data revealing the context of their lives (work, finances, responsibilities, etc.)
- Barriers and facilitators (employment factors, personal factors, academic factors)
- Academic supports and services

Qualitative Exploration

- Student experience of change to self and professional role
- Student experience of the program year by year



PHASE 3 ANALYSIS

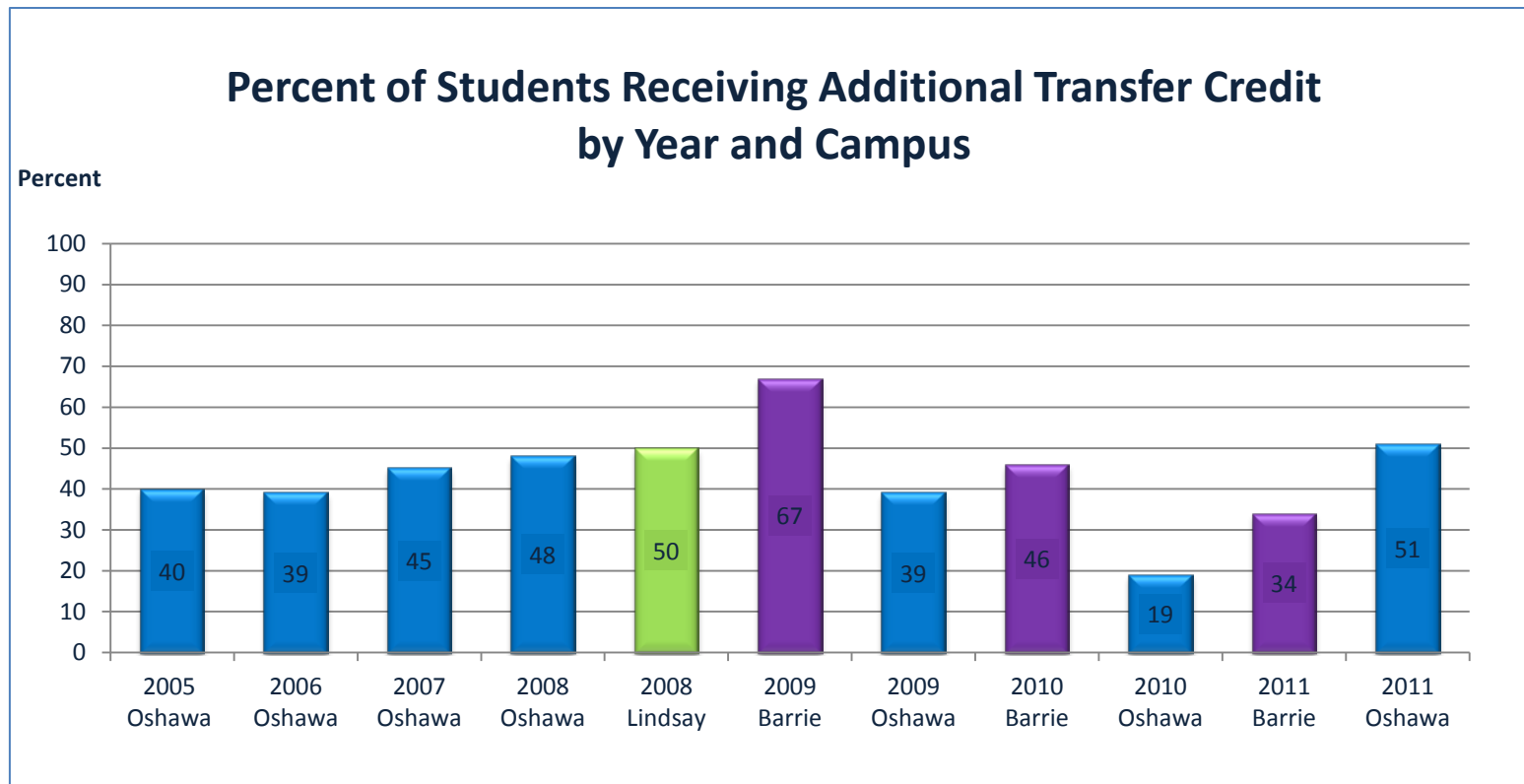
- Enhanced statistical analysis of student tracking data from phase 1 to identify predictors of success in the program
- Graduate experience and perceptions – outcomes, transition & impact explored in fall 2012 with 30 participants

WHAT DID WE FIND?

- Description of student experience into, through and after RPN to BScN Program completed
- Affirmed academic supports
- Identified predictors of success & barriers
- Created evidence-base for curriculum development

PHASE 1 FINDINGS

TRANSFER CREDIT



COMPARATIVE OVERALL GPA

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011	TOTAL
RPNs TOTAL	2.82	2.97	3.04	3.06	3.00	2.96	2.99
Collaborative Nursing TOTAL	2.77	2.80	2.77	2.90	2.93	2.80	2.86



STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Course	RPN-BScN Bridging Students	Collaborative Nursing Students
Pathophysiology 1	✓	
Pathophysiology 2	✓	
Statistics	✓	
Research	✓	
Ethics	=	
Knowing through Inquiry	✓	
Nursing Leadership	✓	

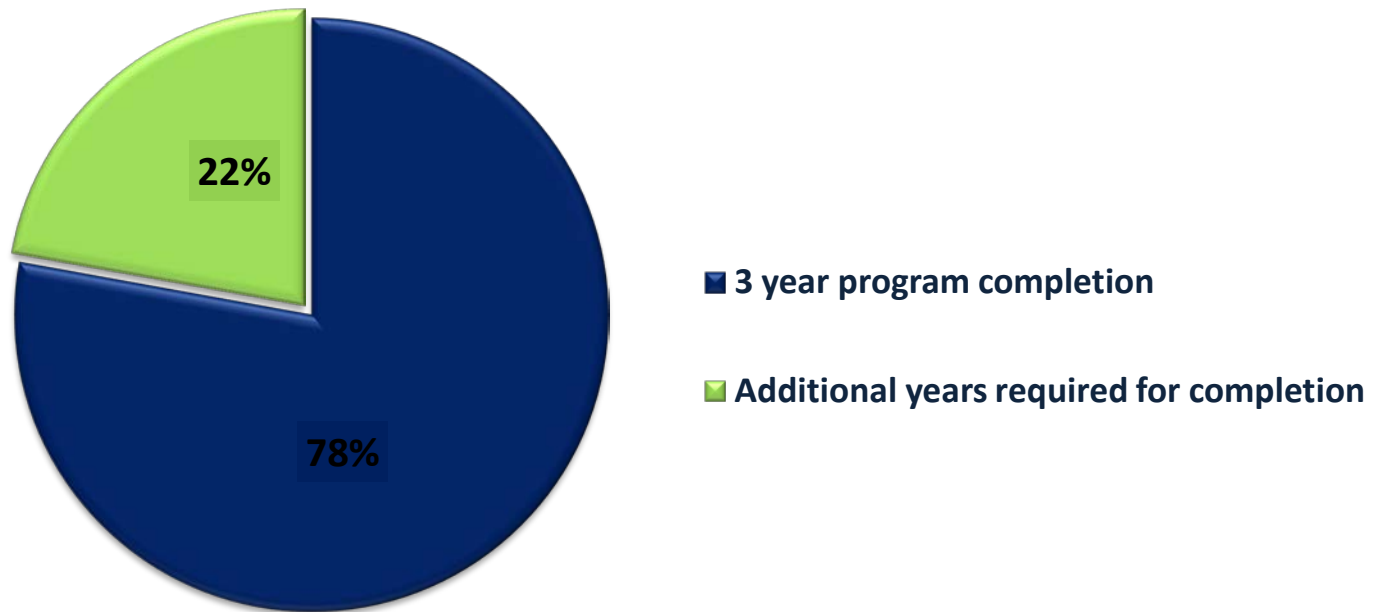
WORTH NOTING

Since the first graduation of RPN to BScN students in 2008, on 2 out of 4 years, graduates of this program have been awarded the Faculty Medal for highest grade point average throughout the entire Faculty of Health Sciences (composed of 5 programs including nursing)



TIME TO COMPLETION

Percentage of Students who Complete the RPN to BScN Program in 3 Years



PROGRAM COMPLETION STATUS

- Completed program: 148 (34%)
- Withdrew: 85 (20%)
- Actively studying: 154 (35%)
- Not enrolled for 2-3 terms: 48 (11%)



FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

Data from 110 students (2008-09)

- Students enter the program familiar with content encountered but unprepared for university and focus of new learning
- Student experience facilitated by support from faculty and peers in the program, academic resources, design of the program and clear expectations
- Students experience barriers such as finances, workload, transportation, technology and developing peer supports from outside to inside the program



PHASE 2 FINDINGS

RPN-BScN students are working full-time, studying full-time, disrupting the stability of their lives, and, at the same time, out-performing their collaborative nursing program and health science student counterparts.



HIGHLIGHTS OF PHASE 2 FINDINGS

Unique characteristics of our bridging students include:

- General demographics
- Dependent care responsibilities
- Area of nursing practice
- Commuting times
- Income and school-related debt



STUDENT EXPERIENCE OF THE PROGRAM

Themes	Summary of Comments
<p>a) The program is intense and demanding.</p> <p>b) Students describe the need to implement strategies for academic success and work-life balance. Life through the duration of the program will be different for students and their families.</p> <p>c) The first 2 years of the program are more often characterized by struggle and frustration with workload, whereas the final year of the program reveals insight into accomplishments.</p>	<p>There are many comments about the heaviness of the workload and the need for time management and organization.</p> <p>Students recognize school must be a priority and that it changes a person's life in relation to family, work, and the composition of their personal life.</p> <p>Students resist program requirements initially, feeling burdened with the demands they experience in multiple areas of their lives.</p> <p>Students experience a struggle to become self-directed, more independent learners than in their past educational experiences, but see this skill as valuable as they complete the program.</p>

FACILITATORS & BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

- 5 point Likert scale (strong barrier – strongly supports my success)
- Areas of inquiry included:
 - Employment factors
 - Personal factors
 - Academic factors
 - Other factors

FACTORS SELF-ASSESSED BY STUDENTS

Employment Factors	Personal Factors	Academic Factors (Part A)	Academic Factors (Part B)	Other Factors
Flexibility	Family support	Writing centre	Private tutor	Financial
Job security	Colleague support	Academic advisor	Tutorial assistant	Health centre
Job availability	Employer support	Program coordinator	Writing requirements	Counselling centre
Work support for CE	Technical skills	Faculty	Math requirements	Stable family income
LOA	Writing skills	Computer access/IT support	Program of study	Access to a vehicle
Peer attitude to CE	Personality traits	Online learning	Online format	Access to public transit
	Work-life balance	Face-to-face learning	Face-to-face format	Access to childcare
		Clinical learning	scheduling	Recreation
		Library		Outlets for stress release

FACILITATORS OF STUDENT SUCCESS

- Employment Factors:
 - Work schedule flexibility
- Personal Factors:
 - Family support, technical skills, writing skills, personality traits, work-life balance
- Academic Factors:
 - Overall program of study, online learning, face to face learning, clinical learning
- Other Factors:
 - Access to a car



BARRIERS TO STUDENT SUCCESS

- Employment Factors:
 - Lack of work schedule flexibility
- Personal Factors:
 - Lack of employer and colleague support
- Academic Factors:
 - Tutorial assistants, scheduling of classes (day/time)
- Other Factors:
 - Financial, lack of stable family income, lack of access to childcare

PHASE 2 MESSAGE

Transition into/through the RPN-BScN program is characterized by a process of progression from being:

reactive/resistant

responsive

proactive/transformational



PHASE 3 FINDINGS

“You don’t go into nursing to get a lot of praise for sure, and the hours are tough, but being a nurse is something I always wanted to be and I would recommend to all people thinking of going into nursing to get their degree because it does make such a big difference.”

(2010 RPN-BScN Graduate)



PHASE 3 DATA

- 30 graduates (20% of total graduates to date).
- 19 completed online survey; 11 took part in a telephone interview
- 77% Oshawa campus; 23% Barrie Campus
- 3 years to complete program: 77%
- 97% successful on first writing of CRNE

GRADUATE PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Graduates describe 3 areas of change:

- Greater freedom, choice & flexibility within their work life
- Greater opportunity to work within their chosen nursing specialization
- Growth experienced on both personal and professional levels



IMPACT OF BECOMING AN RN

Graduates describe 4 impact themes:

- Increased self-esteem & confidence
- Pride in achieving an important goal
- Moderate increase in salary or job security
- Heightened self-appraisal of professional freedom & autonomy

THEMATIC ANALYSIS

3 levels of abstraction from NVivo 9/10 data

RPN to BScN program graduates undertake an external process of role transition as they become employed as RNs, while undergoing an internal process of personal and professional transformation through the experience of RN role enactment.



SYNTHESIS ANALYSIS: SCATTERPLOT DATA

Further inquiry:

- Relationship between entrance GPA and bridge term GPA (+)
- Relationship between “years out” and bridge GPA (-)
- Amount of additional transfer credit (+)
- Relationship between entrance GPA & GPA at graduation (+)
- Relationship between admission GPA and program completion (no difference)



RPN TO BScN PROGRAM EVALUATION SUMMARY

- Qualitative analysis of student experience
- Quantitative analysis of student performance
- Quantitative analysis of the context of student lives
- Students' perceptions & evaluation of facilitators, supports and services as well as barriers to RPN to BScN education
- Comparison of RPN to BScN students with traditional nursing/university students
- Qualitative analysis of graduates perceptions of transition

QUESTIONS TO INVOKE DISCUSSION

- What is your organization doing to support RPN-BScN students to reach success?
- What assumptions do you/your organization have about bridging education for RPNs into BScN Programs and the RN role?
- What would be helpful to know more about from your/your organization's perspective about program evaluation research into RPN to BScN Programs?

