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Holistic Admissions Findings from Three Studies

AACN Baccalaureate Education Conference

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Why Nursing Workforce Diversity Matters…

Why Nursing Diversity Matters?

- Nursing Diversity:

- ❑ Increases cultural competence
- ❑ Improves patient satisfaction
- ❑ Improves patient-provider communication
- ❑ Increases access to care
  - ❑ Vulnerable populations
  - ❑ Underrepresented minorities more likely to practice in underserved areas
- ❑ Economic advantages
  - ❑ Good business practice

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What is Holistic Review?

- Flexible, individualized way of assessing an applicant that considers:
  - Student's life experiences
  - Personal qualities and attributes
  - Traditional measures (e.g., GPA and test scores)

Four Core Principles

1. Broad-based selection criteria linked to school mission and goals, and promote diversity as an essential element for excellence.
2. A balance of experiences, attributes, and academic metrics (EAM) are used, and applied equitably across the entire candidate pool. Criteria are grounded in evidence supporting their use beyond academic metrics.
3. Individualized consideration to how each applicant may contribute to the school and the profession.
4. Race/ethnicity may be considered* when narrowly-tailored to the mission and as part of a broader mix of factors.

Adapted from AAMC materials

*Where permitted by state law

Unconscious Bias

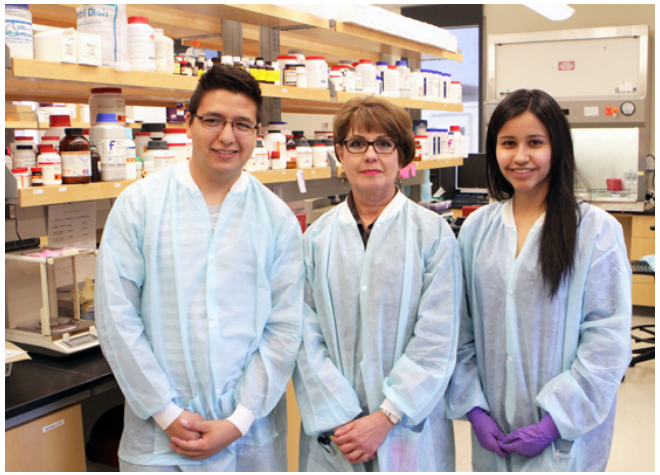
Unconscious bias: When biases affect our world view and decision-making without our knowing it

Three Examples of Unconscious Bias

Bertrand, M., Mullaninathan, S. (2003). Are Emily and Greg More Employable than Lakisha and Jamal? *National Bureau of Economic Research*. Working paper 9873.

Impact on Hiring Students in Labs

Moss-Racusin, C. A., Dovidio, J. F., Brescoll, V. L., Graham, M. J., & Handelsman, J. (2012). Science faculty's subtle gender biases favor male students. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 109*(41), 16474-16479.



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Racial Disparities in Pain Management of Children with Appendicitis in Emergency Departments

Goyal, M. K., Kuppermann, N., Cleary, S. D., Teach, S. J., & Chamberlain, J. M. (2015). Racial Disparities in Pain Management of Children With Appendicitis in Emergency Departments. *JAMA Pediatrics, 169*(11), 996.

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Activity

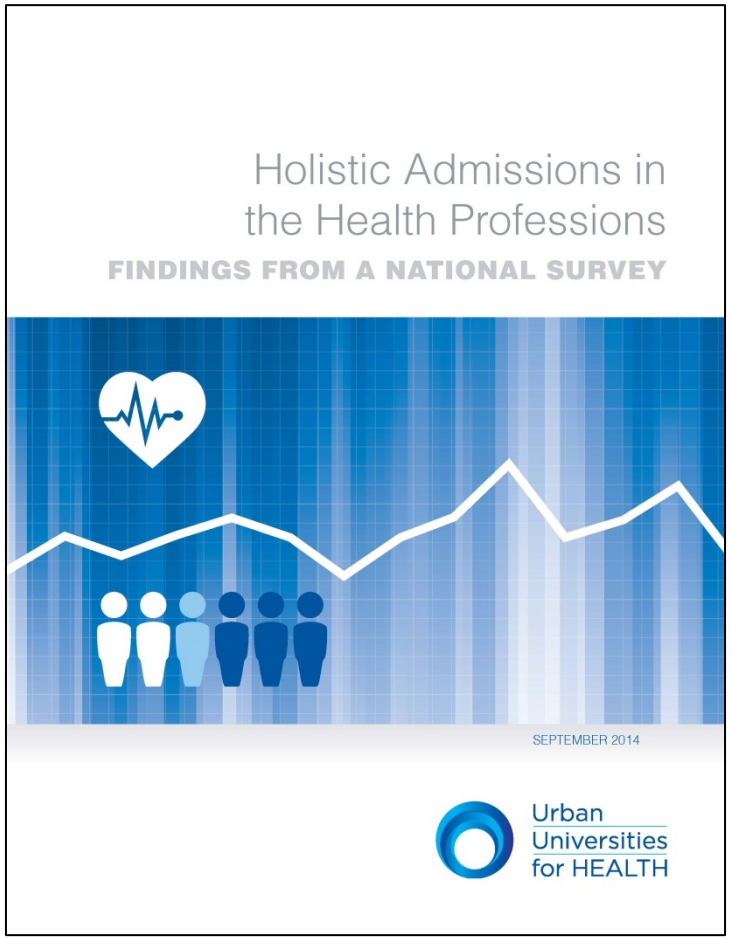
Black male, with four school-aged children, holding a 6 pack of beer, comes to your school asking for an application for himself.

First Impression	Alternative Story

Contrasting Perspectives

1. Read the case.
2. With a partner, share with each other your first impression of what is going on.
3. Together, create an alternative story.

Study Goals: Phase I



- Document extent of use of holistic review in health professions
- Understand impact of holistic review on diversity, student success, and learning environment

Survey Process

- Electronic survey sent to 163 public universities.
- Primary degree programs in dentistry, medicine, pharmacy, public health and nursing
- Dual approach to assessing use of holistic review (self-reported and objective assessments)

Response Rate

- Response rate of 64%
- 228 health professions schools from 104 institutions participated

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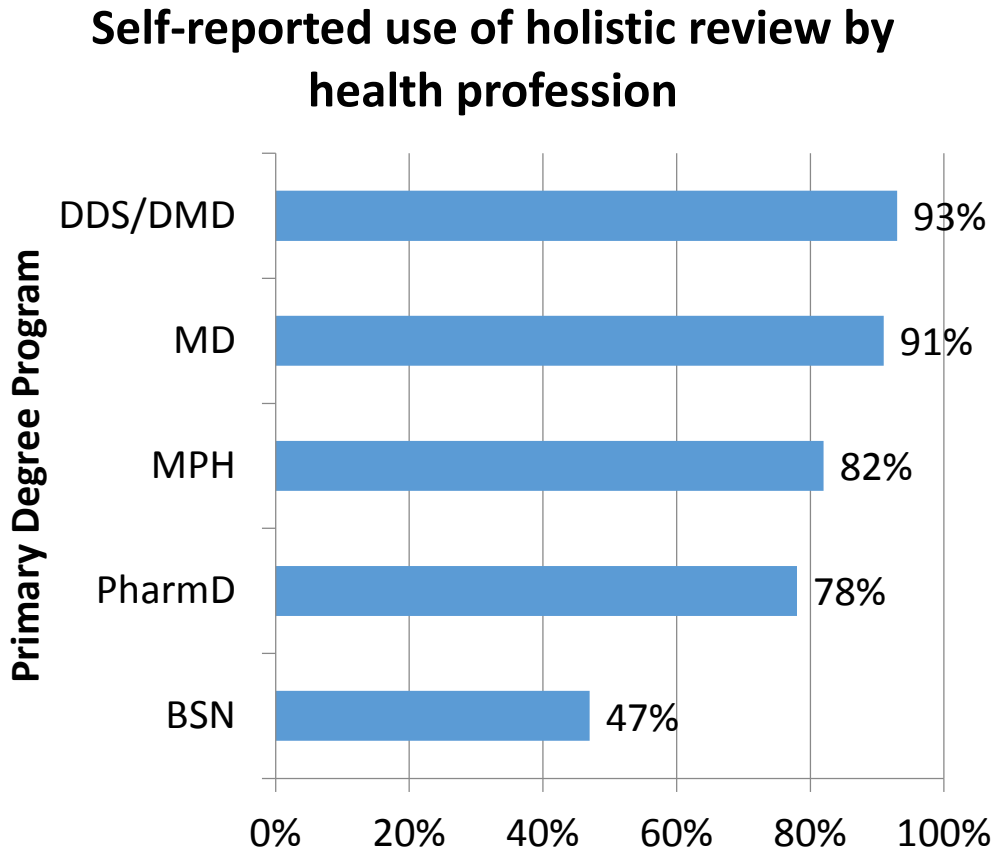
Key Finding #1

Use of holistic review varies by field

75 %

of health professions schools report change



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Key Finding #2

The impact of holistic review has been positive overall, and across various metrics of student success

What is the evidence?

- 72% of survey participants using holistic review that track diversity outcomes (N=132) said diversity of the incoming class had *increased*.
- Average GPA of incoming class (N=136):
  - 38% increased
  - 52% unchanged
  - 10% decreased

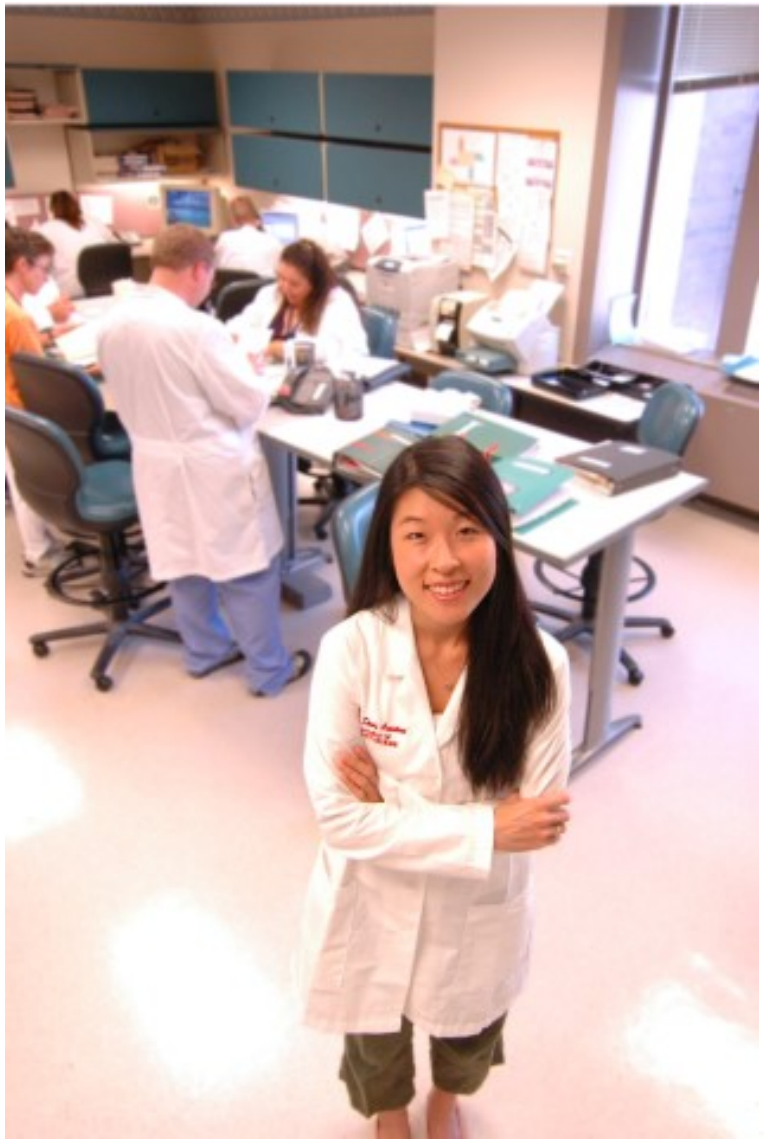
What is the evidence?

- Graduation rate (N=104):
  - 16% increased
  - 80% unchanged
  - 4% decreased
- Similar results reported for average GPA of graduating class, and number of attempts needed to pass clinical exams
- These numbers are for all health profession schools using holistic review *and* evaluating these outcomes.

What about other outcomes?

Outcome	Outcome tracked AND school is using holistic admission	Outcome tracked AND school is NOT using holistic admission
Student engagement with the community	64%	16%
Cooperation and teamwork among students	55%	10%
Student openness to ideas different from their own	50%	4%

Results are for all health profession schools (N=228)



Overall Impact

Nearly all schools (**91%**) rated the impact of holistic review as "positive," with the remainder rating impact as "neutral/no discernable impact."

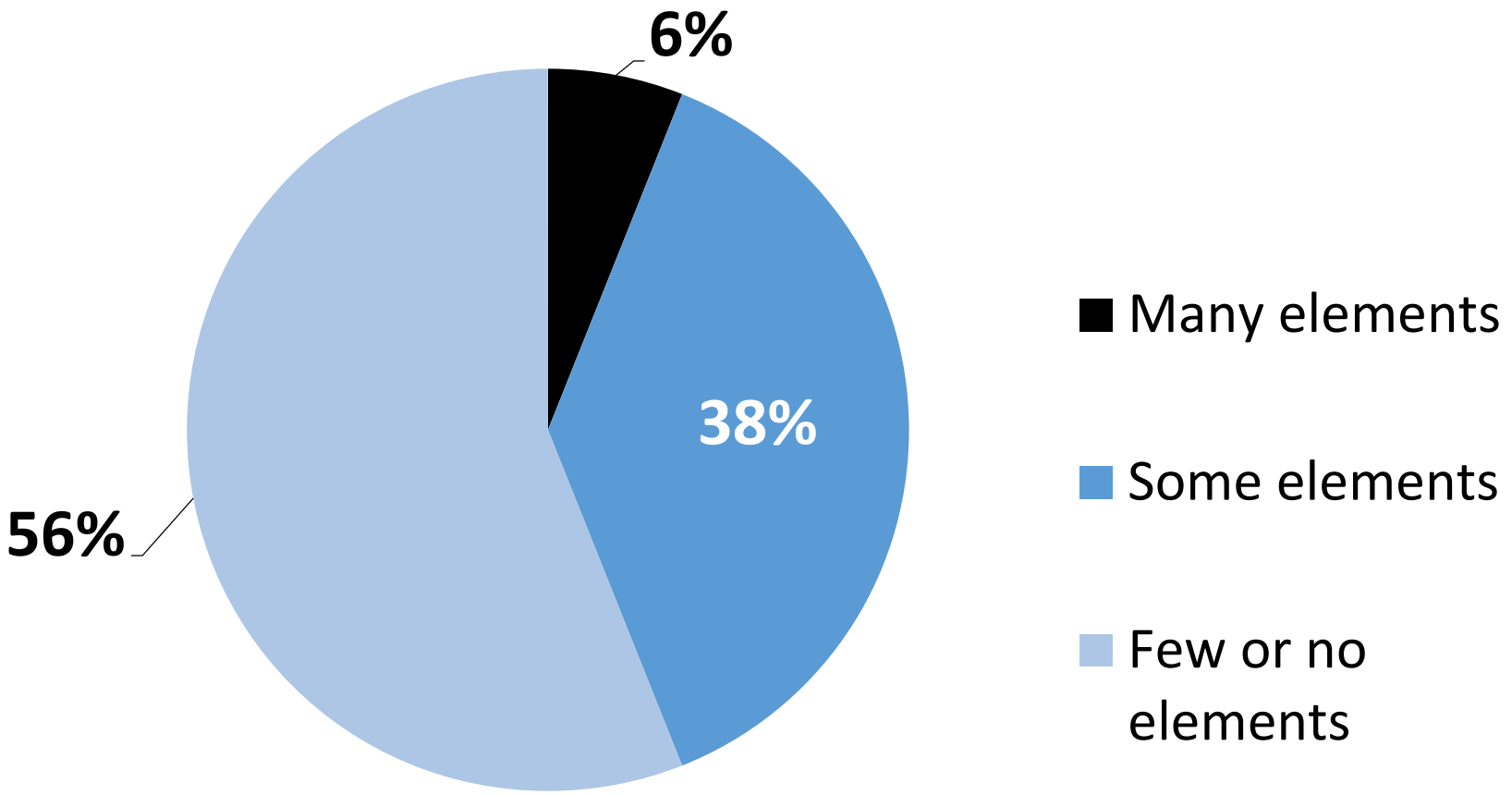
Key Finding #3

Health profession schools focus on diversity in their mission and goal statements, but diversity practices are less prevalent

Diversity Mission & Practices

- **92%** include diversity in mission and/or goals
- **53%** include diversity staff on committee
- **51%** diversity training
- **49%** diversity in admissions statement
- **31%** include members of community on committee

Extent of Use of Holistic Review: BSN respondents



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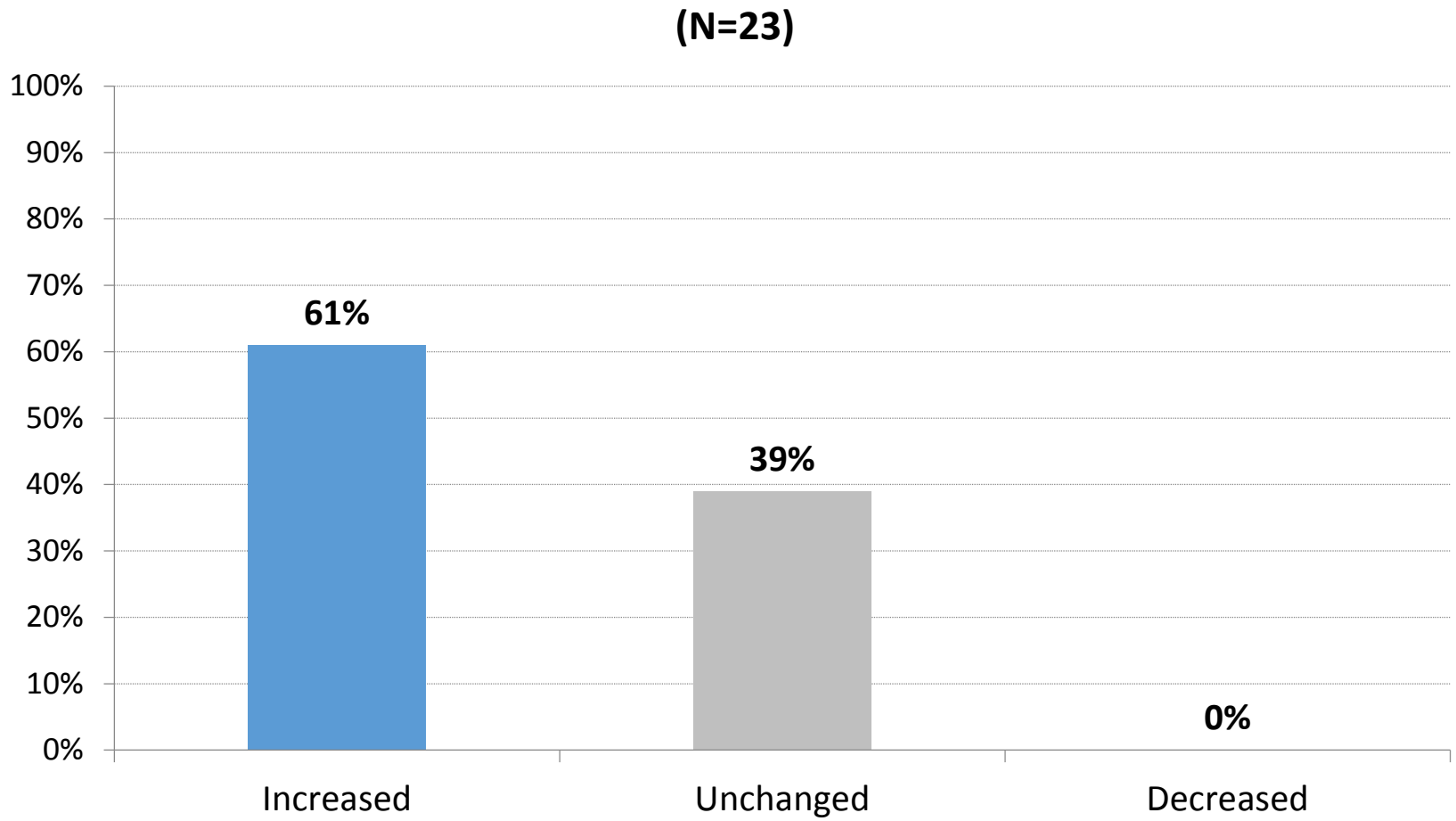
BSN program results: Diversity of the Incoming Class



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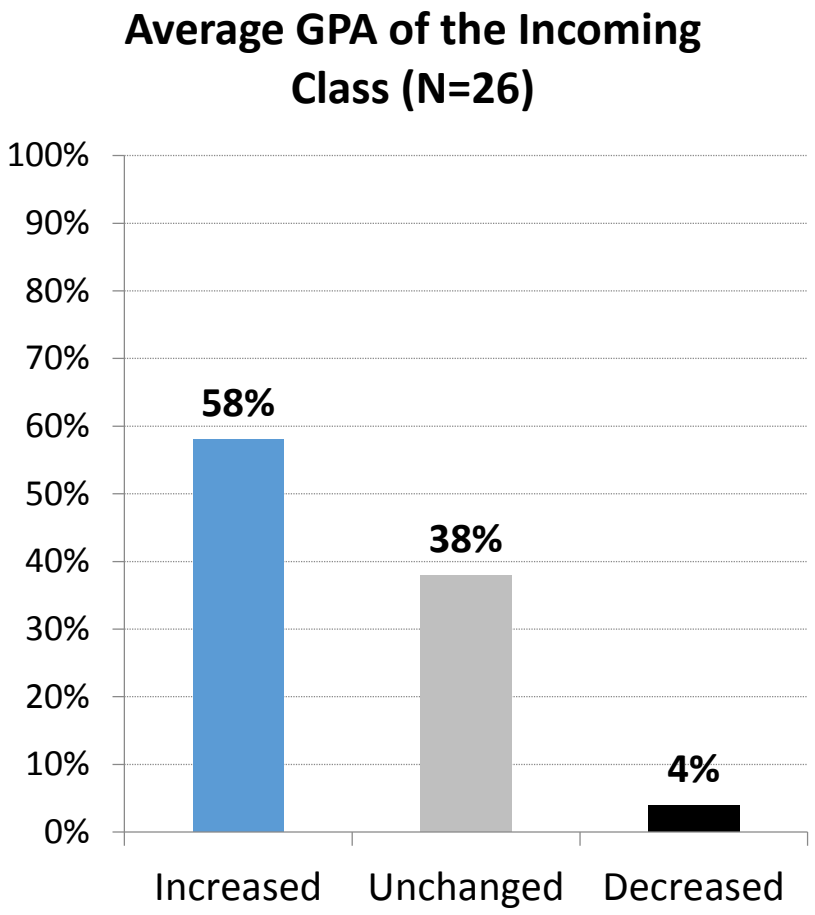
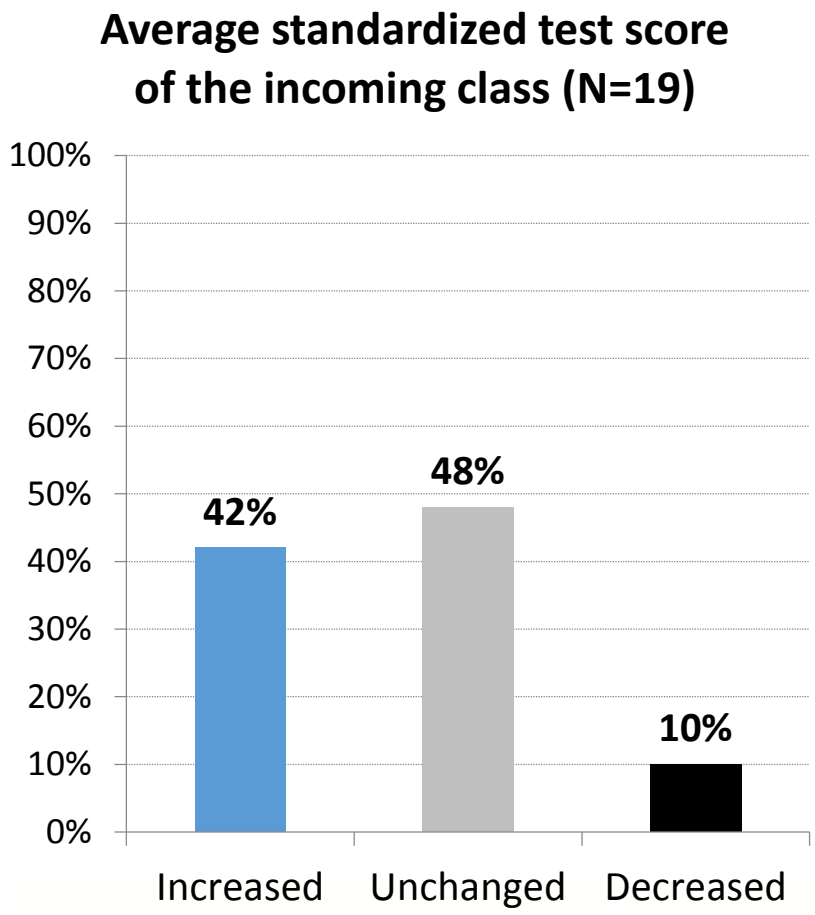
BSN program results: Incoming Class Academic Measures





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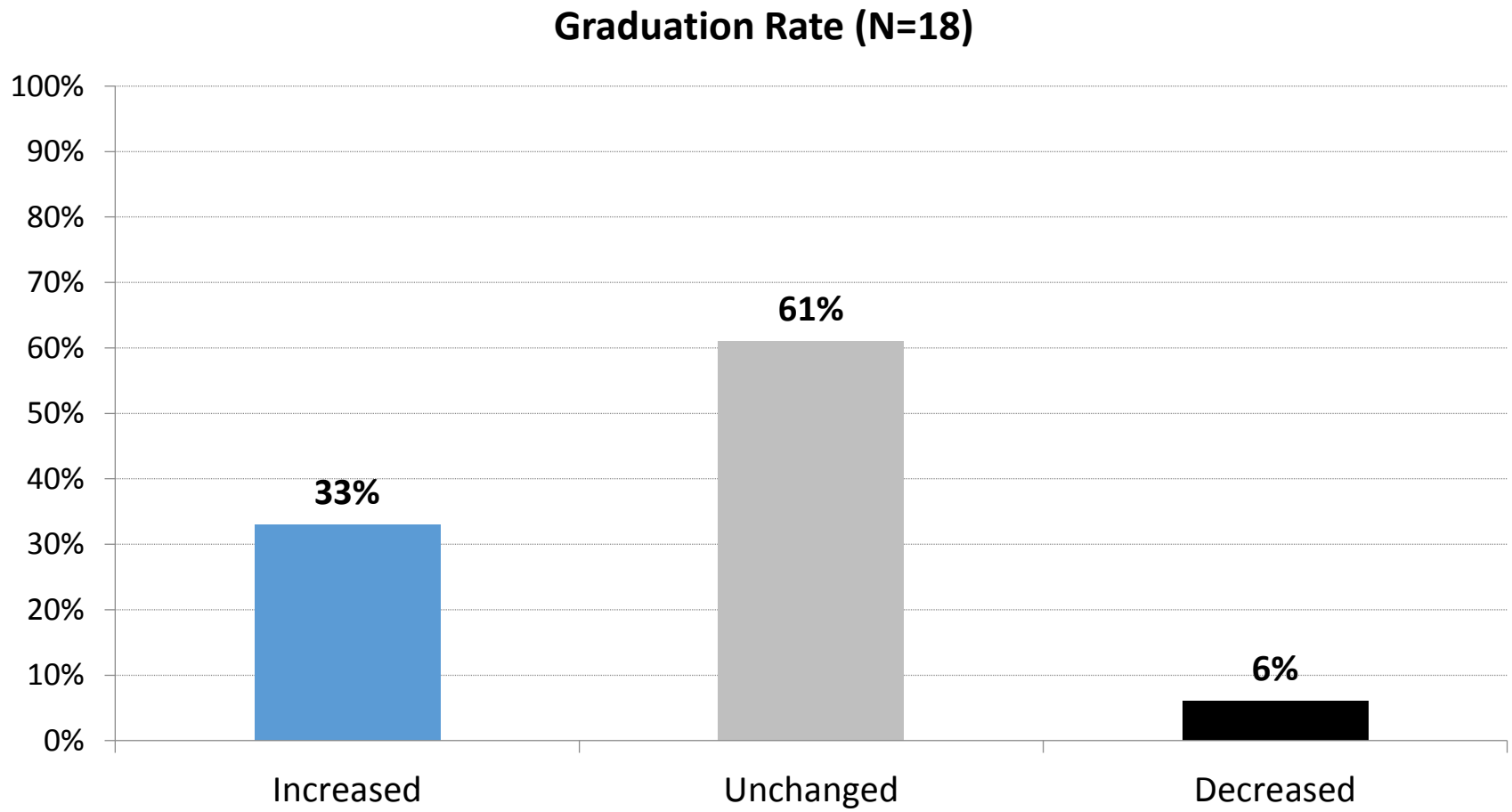
BSN program results: Student Retention



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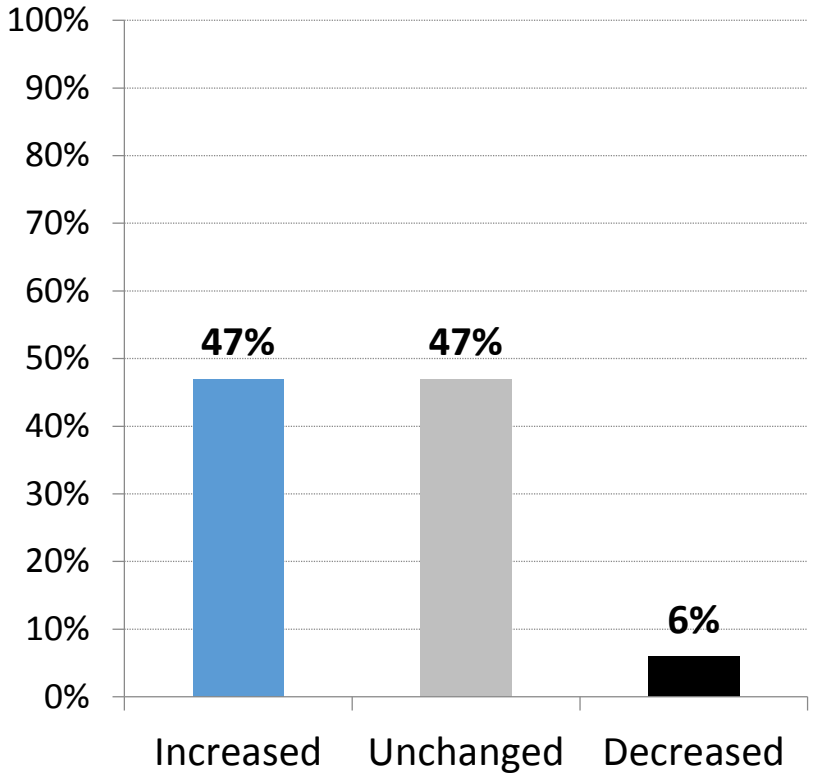
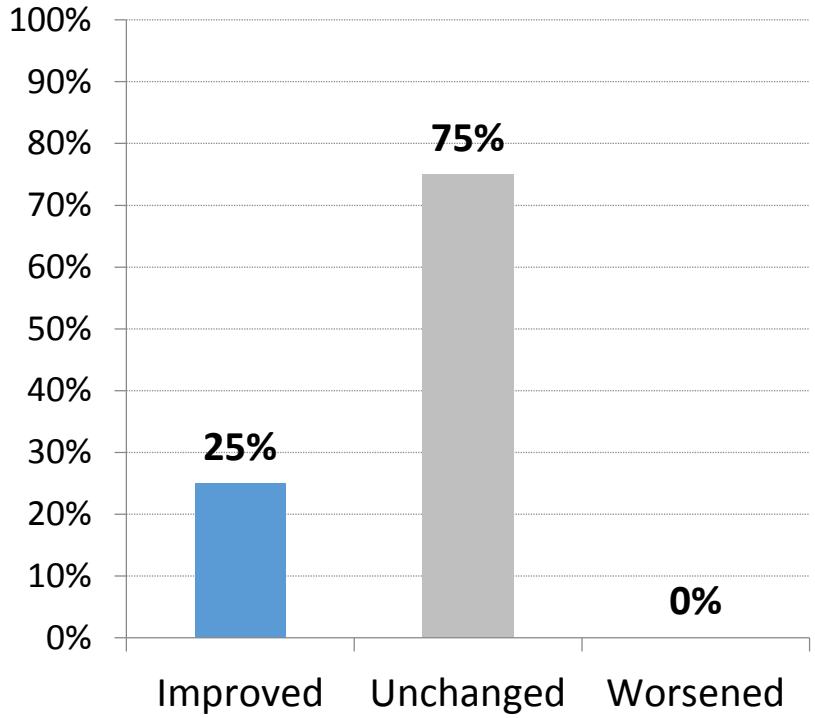
BSN program results: Student Academic Performance

Average GPA of the graduating class (N=17)



Average number of attempts needed to pass required licensing exam (N=16)



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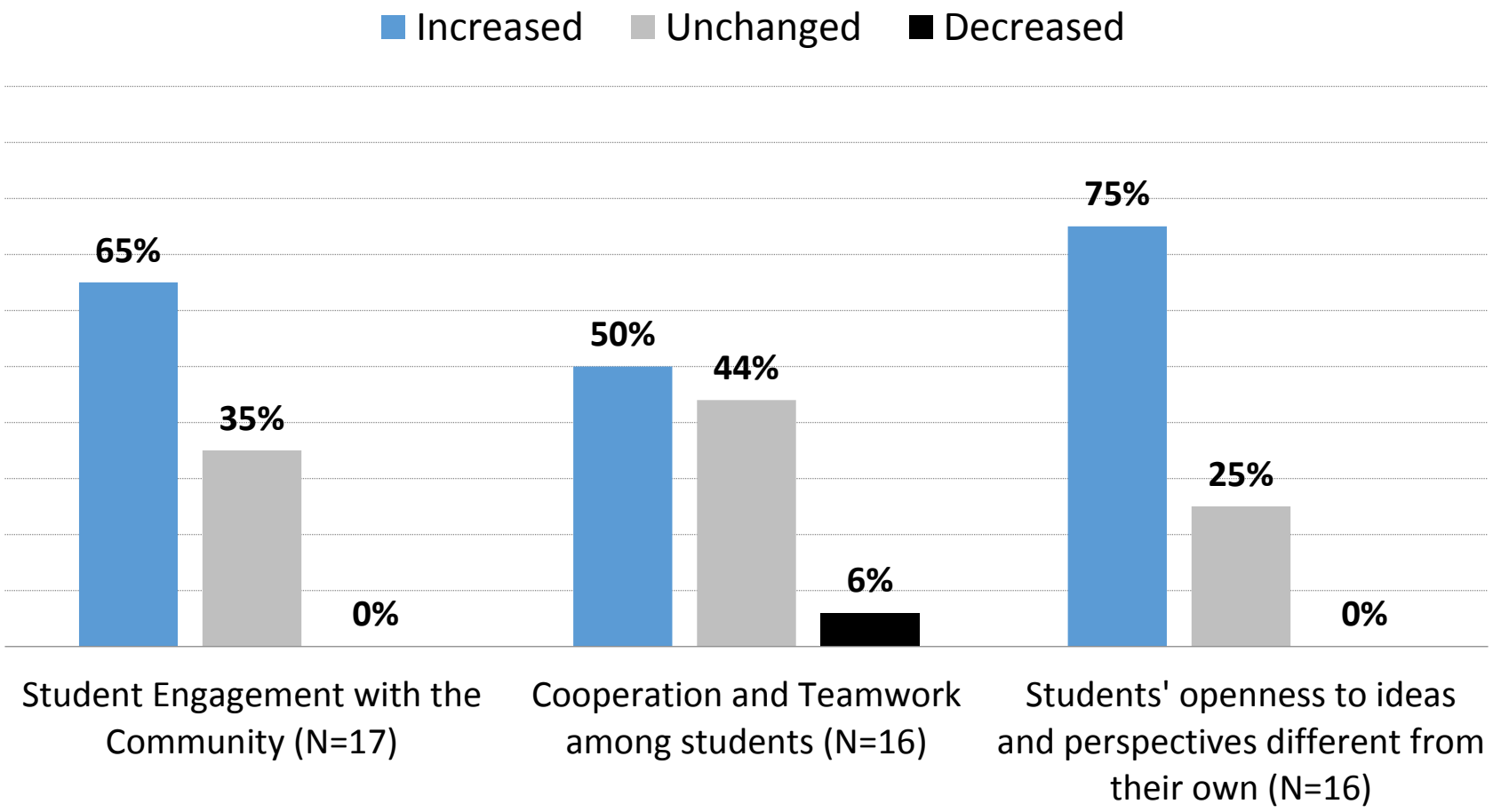
BSN program results: Other Measures of Student Success



Overall Impact

- **97%** of BSN programs that implemented holistic review said that the overall impact was generally “positive.”
- **3%** of BSN programs said the impact was “Neutral/no discernible impact”
- **0%** said the impact was negative

Study Goals: Phase 2

Why is the use of holistic review so uncommon in nursing?

N=66/131 (50%)

Focus Group Process

- Initial set of two focus groups of nursing deans at AACN March 2014.
- Goal was to identify barriers to implementation of holistic review in nursing
- Second set of focus groups at USU in June 2014 reviewed barriers and proposed solutions

Focus Group #1

Barriers to Implementation

- Lack of knowledge regarding holistic review
- Difficulty obtaining buy-in from leadership and administration
- Insufficient on-campus resources
- Other nursing-specific barriers (e.g. multiple pathways to BSN)

Focus Group #2

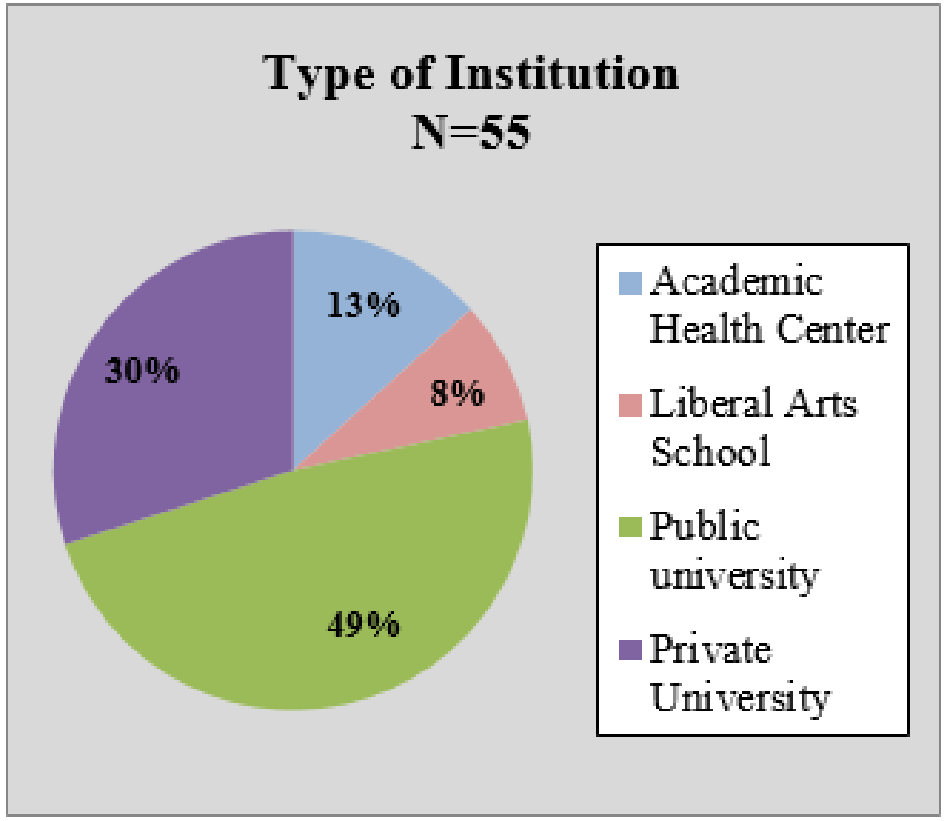
Solutions Proposed by Nursing Deans

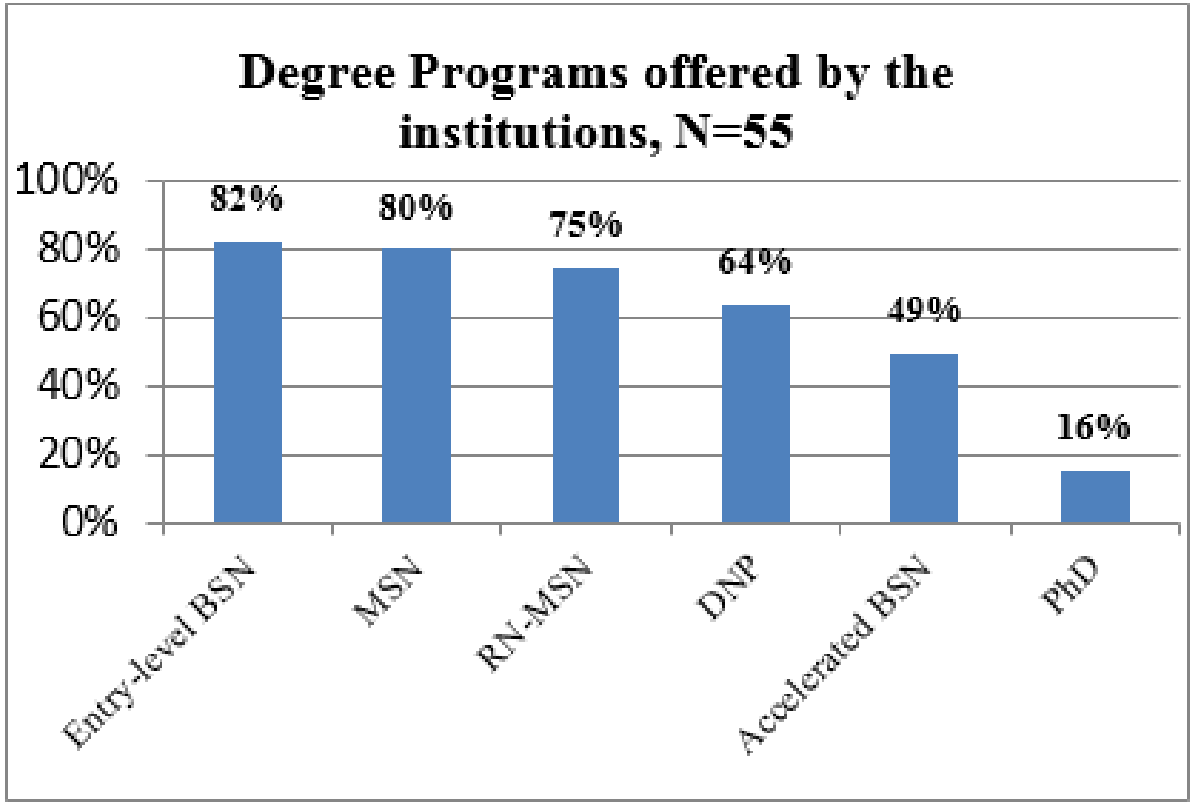
- Everyone's buy-in is required
- Need a model for holistic review in nursing
- Need for training and tools

Study Goals: Phase 3

- **Goal 1: Develop workshops for nursing leaders**
- **Goal 2: Create a toolkit with products for dissemination**
- **Goal 3: Create a learning community to support continuous improvement**

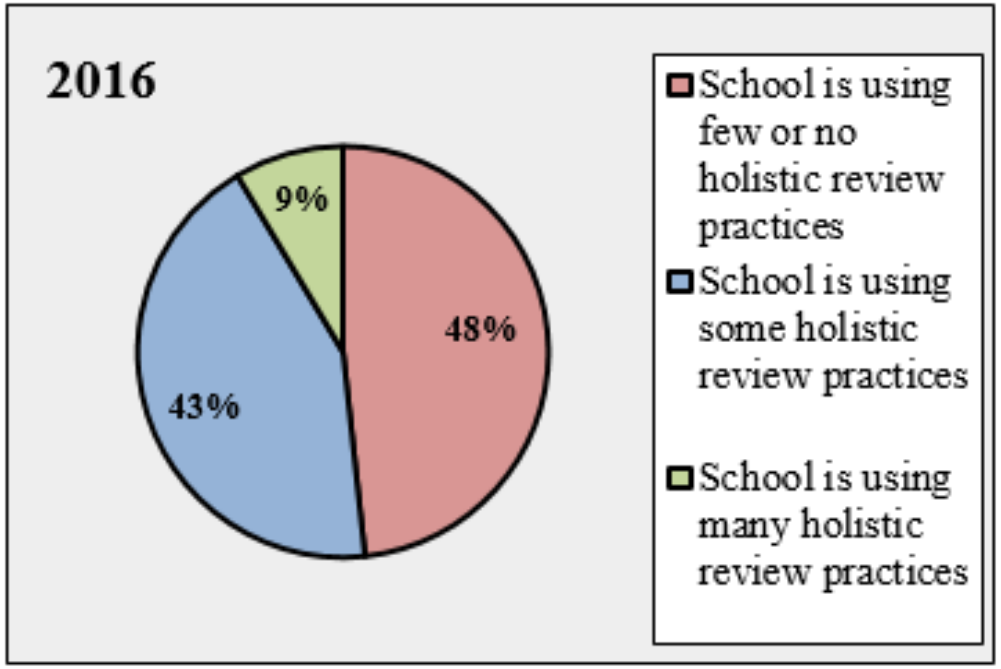
Institutional Demographics

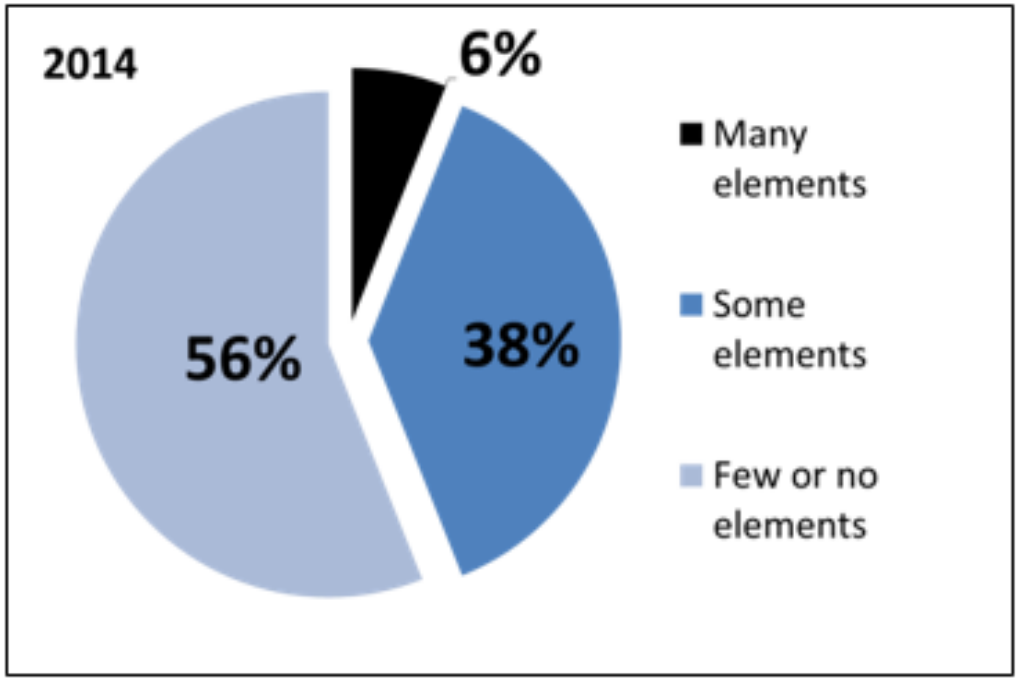




Use of Holistic Review Practices

Percentage of institutions using holistic review practices for the BSN program (N=58)





Workshop Content

- Building the Case for Diversity and Inclusive Learning
- The Nuts and Bolts of Holistic Review
- Leading the Way-Nursing Leaders Speak
- Beginning the Journey-What Does Your Process Look Like?
- Leadership in Action

Goal 2: Create a toolkit with products for dissemination

- Self-assessment tools
- Legal guidelines
- Outcomes to track
- Information on non-cognitive criteria (e.g., language, service activities, resilience)
- Legal guidelines
- Sample essay questions
- Tools for conducting interviews

Goal 3: Create a learning community to support continuous improvement

- Learning collaborative of nursing schools
- Online community/web portal
- Webinars

Admissions practices that Deans planned to change following the workshops

Change has occurred, is in progress, or is planned	Frequency (N=22)	Percentage
Adding diversity to the school/college's mission statement	9	41%
Creating a separate mission statement for admissions that includes diversity	16	73%
Evaluating specific criteria for applicants related to the school/college's mission and goals (e.g., global health mission, primary care mission)	17	77%
Providing training for admissions committees that includes diversity	17	77%
Increasing the frequency of diversity training for admissions committees	10	45%
Selecting students from a waitlist by characteristics related to the school/college's mission and goals	14	64%
Evaluating non-academic criteria alongside academic metrics in the initial screening process for admission[1]	20	91%
Considering criteria related to student background and experience (e.g., first-generation status, socioeconomic status, gender, race, foreign language ability, community of origin)	15	68%

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Thank You