

2008
Passing Rates for Nursing Graduates
in the
North Carolina Community College System

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Background

In the United States, there are two types of licensure exams for nurses: the National Council Licensure Examination for Practical Nurses (NCLEX-PN) and the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN). In North Carolina, the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) prepares graduates to qualify for application to sit for both exams.

In 1994, these examinations became computerized, thus allowing a qualified candidate to sit for an examination anywhere in the United States, regardless of where he/she graduated. In North Carolina, there are six sites available for sitting for the examinations.

Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN): Diploma Program

Thirty-nine community colleges are currently approved by the State Board of Community Colleges to offer a PN program designed to prepare graduates to sit for the Practical Nursing examination. Two private institutions also offer programs which prepare graduates for the PN exam. The North Carolina Board of Nursing (NCBON) reported scores for 32 community college PN programs (4 colleges are approved as a consortium by the Board of Nursing). In addition, scores were reported from two PN-Exit programs. Three programs did not have graduates and did not report scores. One college approved to offer the PN program did not have one. From 2004 through 2008, the passing rates for candidates sitting for the PN examination have shown a 2% decrease nationally, a 4% decrease in North Carolina and a 2% decrease in the NCCCS.

The 2008 passing rates of candidates sitting for the PN examination show a 1% decrease nationally, a 1% decrease in North Carolina and a 1% decrease in the NCCCS, compared to the 2007 results. The aggregate NCCCS passing rate was 7% above the national passing rate for 2008. These results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: FIVE YEAR NCLEX PASSING RATES-PN

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
National Pass Rate	89	89.4	88.3	88	87
State Pass Rate	97	93.9	94	94	93
NC CC Pass Rate	96	94	95	95	94

Twelve programs reported a perfect passing rate of 100% for 2008, compared to seventeen programs reporting a perfect passing rate of 100% for 2007. No programs scored below 80% in 2008, compared to one program in 2007 (see Attachment 1).

In 2008, a total of 833 community college nursing students were first time NCLEX-PN test takers as compared with 794 in 2007. Of the 833 PN students, 783 students successfully passed the PN licensing examination on the first attempt. This represents a 94% pass rate for first time NCLEX-PN test takers which represents a 1% decrease from 2007 (see Attachment 2).

Registered Nursing (RN): Associate Degree Program (ADN)

Fifty-five community colleges are approved by the State Board of Community Colleges to offer a program designed to prepare graduates to sit for the RN examination. The NC University System (eleven Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) programs), hospital education units (two Diploma programs and two ADN programs),

and private institutions (four BSN programs and two ADN programs) also prepare graduates to sit for the same RN examination.

The NCBON reported scores for 48 community college programs (55 colleges are approved to offer the program, but only 48 programs scores are reported due to the three consortiums).

The passing rates of candidates sitting for the RN examination from 2004-2008 have shown a 2% increase nationally, a 3% increase in North Carolina, and a 3.7% increase in the NCCCS. The 2008 passing rates of candidates sitting for the RN examination shows no change nationally, no change in North Carolina and a 3.7% increase for the NCCCS, compared to the 2007 results. The aggregate NCCCS passing rate for 2008 is 2.7% above the national passing rate for 2008. These results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: FIVE YEAR NCLEX PASS RATES-RN

	Candidate	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
National Pass Rate	All RN	85	87.3	88	87	87
State Pass Rate	All RN	86	89	90	89	89
NC CC Pass Rate	ADN	86	89	89	86	89.7

Eleven programs reported a perfect passing rate of 100% for 2008, compared to two programs reporting a perfect passing rate of 100% for 2007. In 2008, four programs reported passing rates below 80%, two of which reported scores below 80% in 2007. In 2007, nine programs (thirteen community colleges) reported passing rates below 80% (see Attachment 3).

Of the 2,108 first time test takers, 1,890 ADN students successfully passed the RN licensing examination on the first attempt. This represents an 89.7% pass rate for first time NCLEX-RN test takers (see Attachment 2). In 2007, 1,768 out of the 2,056 first time test takers passed for a rate of 86%.

Table 3 details the NCLEX-RN passing rate by type of candidates. The ADN programs are offered through the community colleges, two private universities, and two hospital-based programs. The BSN programs are the four-year programs offered at public and private universities. Diploma programs are offered at two hospital-based programs.

Table 3: FIVE YEAR NCLEX-RN PASS RATES BY TYPE OF CANDIDATES

	Type of Candidate	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
National Pass Rate	ADN	85	87.5	88	85	86
State Pass Rate	ADN	86	89.3	89	86	89
NC CC Pass Rate	ADN	86	89	89	86	89.7
National Pass Rate	BSN	85	86.7	86.2	86	87.6
State Pass Rate	BSN	84	87.2	92	90	89
National Pass Rate	Diploma	88	90.2	86.2	88	87.5
State Pass Rate	Diploma	97	99	98	94	97

Conclusion

Overall twenty-three nursing programs reported a perfect passing rate of 100% in 2008. The PN programs all reported passing rates at or above 80% in 2008, compared to one program reporting below 80% in 2007. Four ADN programs reported passing

rates below 80% in 2008, compared to nine programs in 2007. As in the previous year, the PN and the ADN programs offered by the NCCCS, report aggregate passing rates higher than the national passing rates for 2008.

The NCCCS Office of Planning, Accountability, Research and Evaluation has reviewed and verified the passing rates for licensure exams.

The Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill analyzed the multiple factors that lead to student's success in our Associate Degree Nursing programs.

The study utilized three factors that constituted a successful nursing program, as outlined in the *2005 NLNAC's Accreditation Manual with Interpretive Guidelines by Program Type* which were:

1. measurement by graduation rates of students who complete the program within a defined period of time;
2. measurement by performance of licensure examinations of program graduates; and
3. measurement by job placement rates within one year after graduation.

The Sheps Center study found that:

1. Student demographic and socioeconomic characteristics are the most powerful predictors of on-time graduation. Race and age are key factors: younger students (age 18-23) are 14% less likely to graduate on-time than older students (age 24-40), and compared to white students, nonwhite students are approximately 20% less likely to graduate on-time.
3. Students were more likely to pass the NCLEX if they enrolled in a program where more of the faculty had a master's degree, that used standardized testing in the admission process or that had a higher science competency than the standard for the community college.
4. On-time graduates from NCCCS ADN programs have a higher retention rate (90%) in the North Carolina RN workforce and they tend to enter practice close to the communities where they were educated. Graduates are twice as likely to practice in rural areas and three times more to practice in NC's most underserved communities as compared to BSN students graduating from North Carolina programs at the same time.

The Sheps Center study identified several characteristics of high performing programs in the study. They are:

1. standardized test to rank applicants and basic Science competency requirement;
2. required orientation for clinical instructors; and
3. graduate education for Nursing Faculty.

Five Year NCLEX Pass Rates-PN

Provided by the NC Board of Nursing

		2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
National Pass Rate		89	89.4	88.3	88	87
State Pass Rate		97	93.9	94	94	93
NC CC Pass Rate		96	94	95	95	94
1. Asheville-Buncombe	LPN	100	97	97	97	95
2. Beaufort County CC	LPN	100	92	94	92	95
3. Bladen CC	LPN	100	100	100	100	86
4. Brunswick CC	LPN	100	81	90	82	100
5. Caldwell CC	PN-Exit	100	100	100	0	0
6. Cape Fear CC	LPN	100	95	100	100	100
7. Carteret CC	LPN	86	95	100	100	93
8. Central Carolina CC	LPN	100	100	97	100	93
9. Cleveland CC	LPN	100	89	81	100	0
10. Coastal Carolina CC	LPN	100	100	100	100	100
11. College of The Albemarle	LPN	78	77	100	94	100
12. Craven CC	LPN	100	100	100	90	85
13. Durham Tech CC	LPN	67	74	97	94	100
14. Fayetteville Tech CC	LPN	100	95	94	98	89
15. Forsyth Tech CC	LPN	100	100	92	93	94
16. Gaston College	LPN	96	97	96	100	97
17. Guilford Tech	LPN		93	100	88	96
18. Isothermal CC	LPN	100	89	100	100	97
19. James Sprunt CC	LPN	100	100	93	89	89
20. Johnston CC	PN-Exit	100	100	100	100	100
21. Lenoir CC	LPN	93	100	88	83	100
22. Mayland CC	LPN		88	95	94	89
23. McDowell Tech CC	LPN	95	96	94	97	88
24. Montgomery CC	LPN	96	90	95	100	90
25. NEWH Nursing Consortium Nash, Edgecombe, Wilson, & Halifax	LPN	96	100	99	94	95
26. Richmond CC	LPN				100	100
27. Roanoke Chowan CC	PN-Exit	100	100	100	100	94
28. Robeson CC	PN-Exit	94	91	89	100	0
29. Rockingham CC	LPN	94	86	80	76	93
30. Rowan-Cabarrus CC	LPN	87	89	88	100	80
31. Sampson CC	LPN	96	97	96	100	100
32. Sandhills CC	LPN	100	88	96	95	100
33. South Piedmont CC	LPN	100	100	100	88	81
34. Southeastern CC	LPN	100	100	83	100	0
35. Southwestern CC	LPN	100	100	100	100	100
36. Surry CC	LPN	100	100	100	96	89
37. Vance-Granville CC	LPN	91	94	90	93	97
38. Wayne CC	LPN	100	100	100	100	100

Passing Rates on Licensing and Certification Examinations, 2008

-- Nursing --

First-Time Test Takers

Provided by the NC Board of Nursing

INSTITUTION	FTE	PRACTICAL NURSING		REGISTERED NURSING	
		# TESTED	% PASSED	# TESTED	% PASSED
Alamance CC	3,871			22	95%
Asheville-Buncombe TCC	6,186	38	95%	86	95%
Beaufort County CC	1,821	21	95%	38	92%
Bladen CC	1,399	14	86%	7	100%
Blue Ridge CC	2,105			23	87%
Brunswick CC	1,548	17	100%	25	60%
Caldwell CC & TI	4,135			42	88%
Cape Fear CC	7,259	15	100%	55	100%
Carteret CC	1,751	15	93%	7	100%
Catawba Valley CC	4,733			68	88%
Central Carolina CC	5,118	41	93%	15	100%
Central Piedmont CC	14,459			50	92%
Cleveland CC*	2,944	0	0%		
Coastal Carolina CC	4,348	15	100%	25	92%
College of The Albemarle	2,351	16	100%	25	92%
Craven CC	2,751	13	85%	50	92%
Davidson County CC	3,663			50	86%
Durham TCC	4,622	16	100%	56	95%
Edgecombe CC**	2,122				
Fayetteville TCC	10,252	54	89%	67	88%
Forsyth TCC	6,661	50	94%	101	92%
Gaston College	4,691	38	97%	55	95%
Guilford TCC	9,882	27	96%	89	91%
Halifax CC**	1,557				
Haywood CC***	1,903				
Isothermal CC*	2,094	32	97%		
James Sprunt CC	1,348	19	89%	22	64%
Johnston CC	4,158	19	100%	35	100%
Lenoir CC	3,335	7	100%	32	97%
Martin CC	899				
Mayland CC	1,925	18	89%	18	94%
McDowell TCC*	1,176	34	88%		
Mitchell CC	2,367			42	95%
Montgomery CC	1,027	29	90%		
Nash CC**	2,655				
Pamlico CC	543				
Piedmont CC	2,714			20	95%
Pitt CC	5,876			75	77%
Randolph CC	2,468			20	95%
Richmond CC	2,110	18	100%	48	88%
Roanoke-Chowan CC	876	16	94%	16	100%

INSTITUTION (continued)	FTE	PRACTICAL NURSING		REGISTERED NURSING	
		# TESTED	% PASSED	# TESTED	% PASSED
Robeson CC	3,693			24	83%
Rockingham CC	2,043	28	93%	20	100%
Rowan-Cabarrus CC	5,137	20	80%	26	100%
Sampson CC	1,696	31	100%	22	100%
Sandhills CC	3,732	23	100%	63	84%
South Piedmont	2,220	16	81%	19	95%
Southeastern CC	2,373	0	0%	23	100%
Southwestern CC***	2,248	6	100%		
Stanly CC	2,435			34	91%
Surry CC	3,281	19	89%	81	73%
Tri-County CC***	1,168				
Vance-Granville CC	4,237	29	97%	26	100%
Wake TCC	12,296			120	89%
Wayne CC	3,517	15	100%	31	81%
Western Piedmont CC	3,118			34	88%
Wilkes CC	2,831			27	85%
Wilson CC**	2,082				
Foothills Nursing Consortium*				69	83%
NEWH Nursing Consortium**		64	95%	131	91%
Region A Nursing Consortium***				74	91%
System Totals	205,803	833	94%	2,108	89.7%

* Foothills Nursing Consortium includes: Cleveland CC, Isothermal CC, and McDowell TCC.

** NEWH Nursing Consortium includes: Nash CC, Edgecombe CC, Wilson TCC, and Halifax CC.

*** Region A Nursing Consortium includes: Haywood CC, Southwestern CC, and Tri-County CC.

Provided by the NC Board of Nursing

Five Year NCLEX Pass Rates-RN

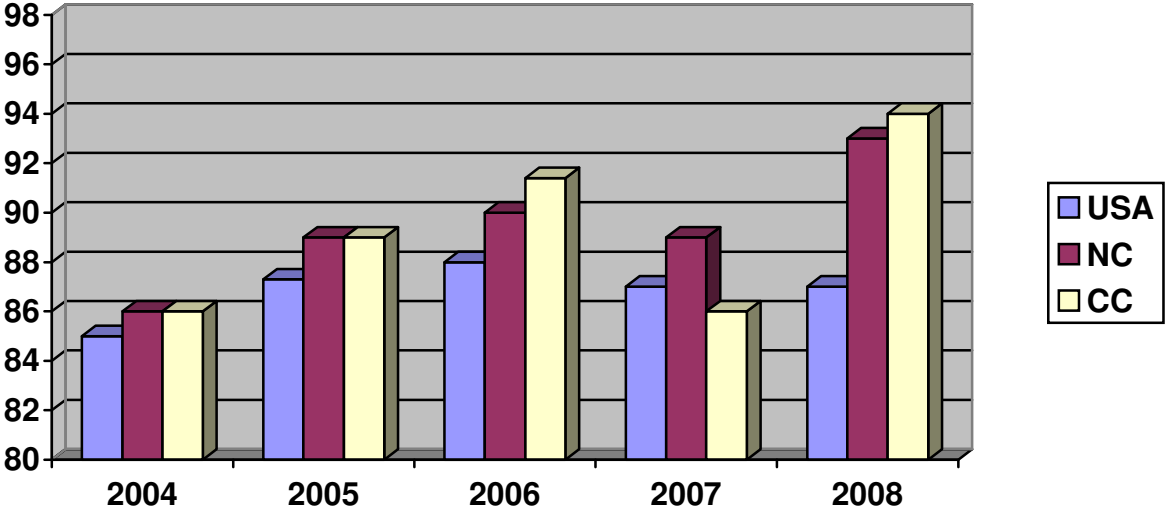
Provided by the NC Board of Nursing

		2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
National Pass Rate	ALL RN	85	87.3	88	87	87
State Pass Rate	ALL RN	86	89	90	89	89
NCCCS Pass Rate	ADN	86	89	89	86	89.7
National Pass Rate	ADN	85	87.5	88	85	86
State Pass Rate	ADN	86	89.3	89	86	89
1. Alamance CC	ADN	78	83	87	94	95
2. Asheville-Buncombe CC	ADN	92	91	96	98	95
3. Beaufort County CC	ADN	82	85	92	80	92
4. Bladen CC	ADN			53	81	100
5. Blue Ridge CC	ADN	88	90	81	91	87
6. Brunswick	ADN				58	60
7. Caldwell CC	ADN	91	84	90	71	88
8. Cape Fear CC	ADN	89	100	100	98	100
9. Carteret CC	ADN				90	100
10. Catawba Valley CC	ADN	93	84	88	86	88
11. Central Carolina CC	ADN	88	100	100	100	100
12. Central Piedmont CC	ADN	92	76	88	96	92
13. Coastal Carolina CC	ADN	92	91	96	96	92
14. College of The Albemarle	ADN	90	100	96	90	92
15. Craven CC	ADN	74	86	90	82	92
16. Davidson County CC	ADN	100	98	98	93	86
17. Durham Tech CC	ADN	90	91	96	93	95
18. Fayetteville Tech CC	ADN	90	89	82	86	88
19. Foothills Nursing Consortium * <i>Cleveland, Isothermal, McDowell</i>	ADN	83	87	71	71	83
20. Forsyth Tech CC	ADN	77	86	90	89	92
21. Gaston College CC	ADN	95	86	90	89	95
22. Guilford Tech CC	ADN	100	93	97	88	91
23. James Sprunt CC	ADN	91	90	77	85	64
24. Johnston CC	ADN	97	100	97	97	100
25. Lenoir CC	ADN	83	77	97	61	97
26. Mayland CC	ADN	77	100	100	88	94
27. Mitchell CC	ADN	100	97	100	95	95
28. NEWH Nursing Consortium * <i>Nash, Edgecombe, Wilson, Halifax</i>	ADN	83	95	91	84	91
29. Piedmont CC	ADN	75	93	95	88	95
30. Pitt CC	ADN	92	91	80	88	77
31. Randolph CC	ADN	76	76	71	88	95

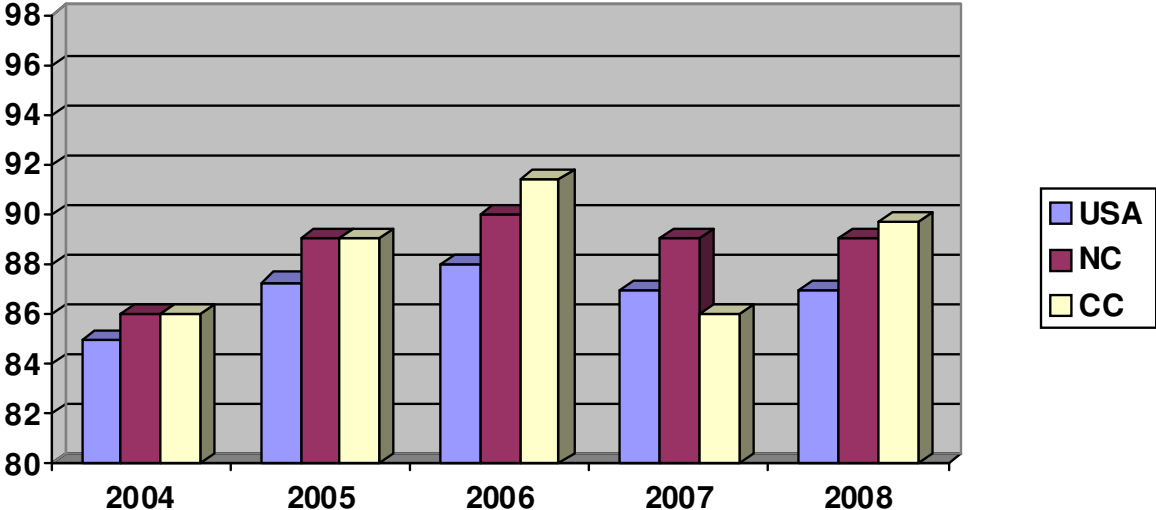
32. Region A Nursing Consortium <i>Haywood</i> <i>Southwestern</i> <i>Tri-County</i>	ADN	85 84 75 100	90 79 85 100	84 100 80 73	71 * * *	91
33. Richmond CC	ADN	89	78	88	84	88
34. Roanoke-Chowan CC	ADN	83	100	95	90	100
35. Robeson CC	ADN	56	57	96	80	83
36. Rockingham CC	ADN	88	96	74	64	100
37. Rowan-Cabarrus CC	ADN	94	100	100	69	100
38. Sampson CC	ADN	92	88	77	88	100
39. Sandhills CC	ADN	91	84	94	93	84
40. Southeastern CC	ADN	82	92	83	74	100
41. South Piedmont	ADN					95
42. Stanly CC	ADN	82	97	92	98	91
43. Surry CC	ADN	73	99	95	78	73
44. Vance-Granville CC	ADN	75	79	74	93	100
45. Wake Tech CC	ADN	94	91	84	83	89
46. Wayne CC	ADN	91	93	91	96	81
47. Western Piedmont CC	ADN	59	88	97	100	88
48. Wilkes CC	ADN	88	65	86	87	85

* Individual scores not reported.

Five Year NCLEX Pass Rates Practical Nursing-PN

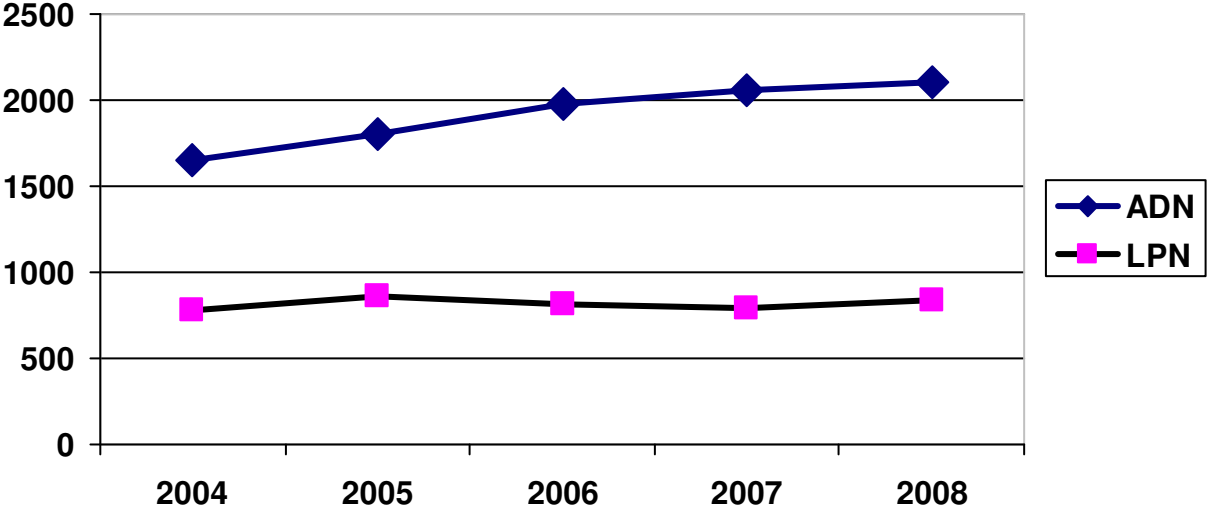


Five Year NCLEX Pass Rates Registered Nursing-RN



Provided by the NC Board of Nursing

**Numbers of First Time NCLEX Test Takers NCCCS
2004-2008
PN & RN**



Provided by the NC Board of Nursing