

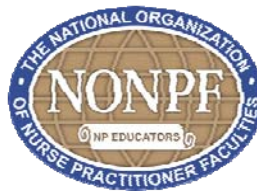
2020-2021
ENROLLMENT AND GRADUATIONS
In Baccalaureate and Graduate Programs in Nursing

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
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HIGHLIGHTS

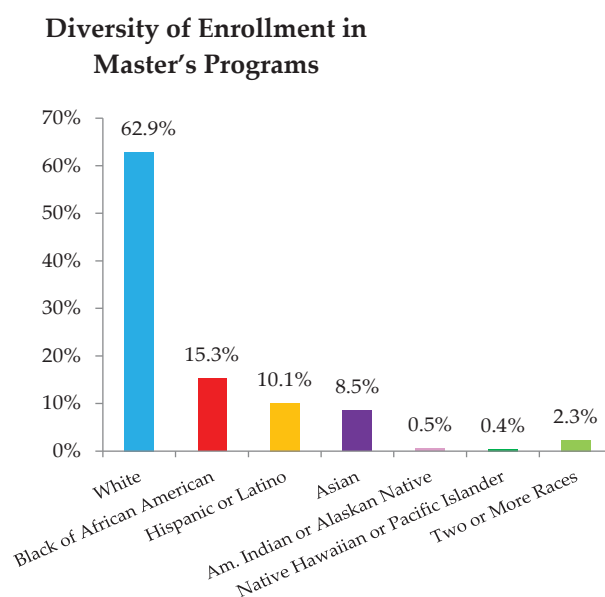
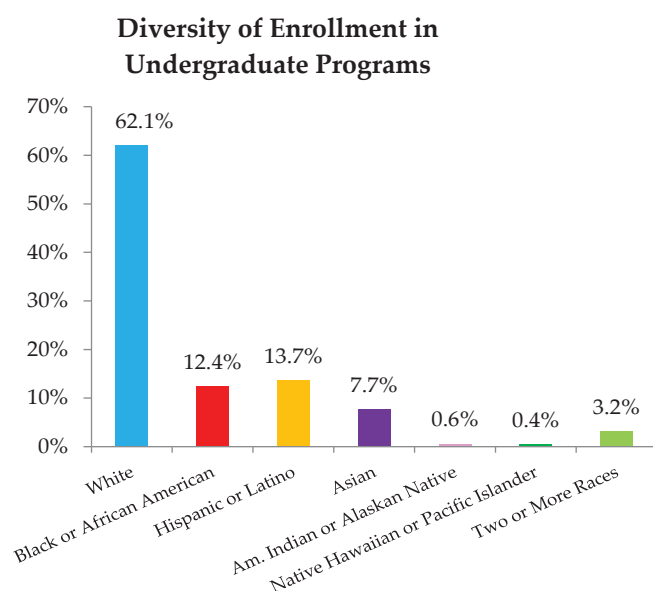
NUMBER OF SCHOOLS AND RESPONSE RATE

- The findings in this report are based on responses from 956 of the 1,035 institutions in the United States and its territories with baccalaureate and graduate-degree programs that were surveyed in fall 2020. The overall response rate was 92.4 percent (Table 1a).

ENROLLMENT (FALL 2020) AND GRADUATIONS (AUGUST 1, 2019 TO JULY 31, 2020)

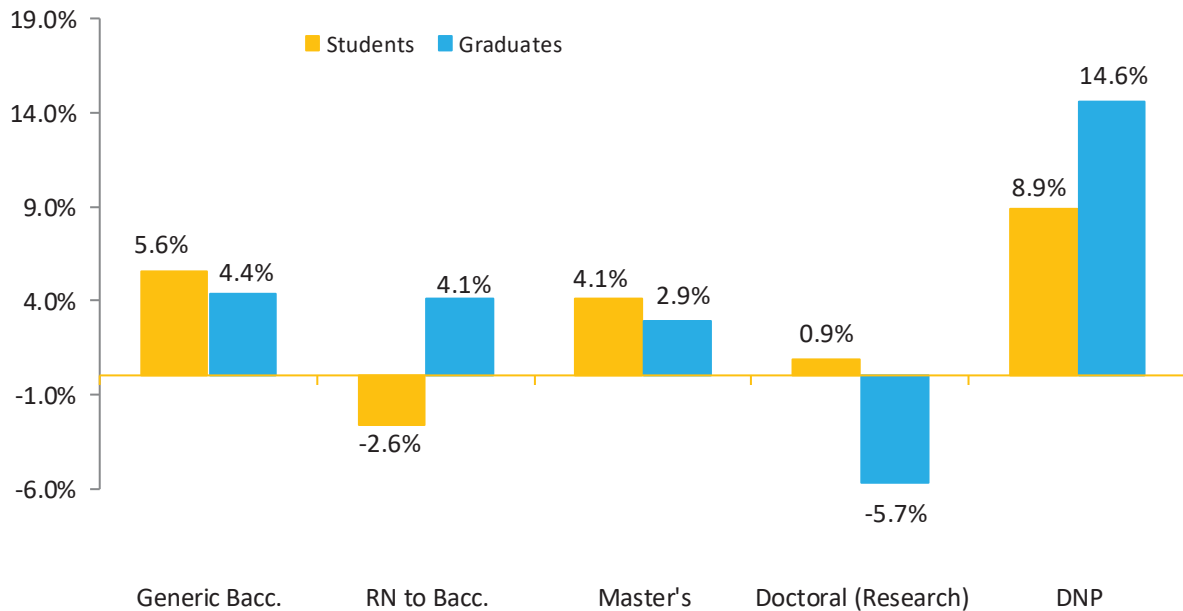
- A total of 251,145 students were enrolled in *generic (entry-level) baccalaureate* nursing education programs. *RN-to-baccalaureate* enrollment totaled 132,440 (Table 8).
- Enrollment at the *master's*, *doctoral (research-focused)*, and *doctor of nursing practice (DNP)* levels totaled 152,341; 4,626; and 39,530, respectively (Table 8).
- Generic (entry-level) baccalaureate graduates totaled 82,380 and RN-to-baccalaureate totaled 69,203. Master's, doctoral (research-focused), and doctor of nursing practice (DNP) levels totaled 51,386; 760; and 9,158, respectively (Table 8).
- Males accounted for 12.8 percent of *all baccalaureate* graduates (*generic* and *RN-to-baccalaureate*). The percentage of men graduating from *master's*, *doctoral (research-focused)*, and *doctor of nursing practice (DNP)* programs was 11.7, 11.4, and 12.6, respectively (Table 9).
- 35.3 percent of undergraduate enrollees and 37.9, 33.8, and 37.2 percent of enrollees in master's, research-focused doctoral programs, and DNP programs were from racial and ethnic minorities, respectively (Table 10).

Enrollment (Fall 2020) Diversity in Undergraduate and Master's Programs



TWO-YEAR COMPARISONS IN ENROLLMENT AND GRADUATIONS (BASED ON DATA FROM SCHOOLS REPORTING IN BOTH 2019 AND 2020)

Percent Change in Enrollment and Graduations in Schools Reporting in Both 2019 and 2020.



- Enrollment of *generic (entry-level) baccalaureate* students increased by 5.6 percent (13,279 students, Table 12). The increase was 5.6, 5.4, 2.9, and 11.5 percent in the North Atlantic, Midwest, South, and West, respectively (Table 14). *Generic (entry-level) baccalaureate* graduates increased by 4.4 percent (3,432 graduates, Table 13). Despite this increase, 66,274 qualified applications were not offered admission to *generic baccalaureate* programs mostly due to insufficient clinical sites and insufficient numbers of faculty (Tables 39 and 40).
- *RN-to-baccalaureate* enrollment decreased by 2.6 percent (2,074 students) and graduations increased by 4.1 percent (2,730 graduates, Tables 12 and 13).
- *Master's*-level students increased by 4.1 percent (5,010 students) and graduations increased by 2.9 percent (1,436 graduates, Tables 12 and 13).
- Enrollment in *doctoral (research-focused)* programs increased by 0.9 percent (41 students) and graduations decreased 5.7 percent (46 graduates, Tables 12 and 13).
- *Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)* programs experienced an enrollment increase of 8.9 percent (3,205 students) and graduations increased by 14.6 percent (1,161 graduates, Tables 12 and 13).

FIVE-YEAR TRENDS IN ENROLLMENT AND GRADUATIONS (BASED ON DATA FROM SCHOOLS REPORTING EACH YEAR SINCE 2016)

Five-Year Trends in Enrollments and Graduations by Type of Degree (2016–2020).

DEGREE	STUDENTS		GRADUATES	
	AVERAGE CHANGE PER YEAR*	SIGNIFICANCE (p value)	AVERAGE CHANGE PER YEAR*	SIGNIFICANCE (p value)
Generic Bacc.	12,136	<0.001	3,560	<0.001
RN-to-Bacc.	-978		1,980	0.007
Master's	5,990	<0.001	2,868	<0.001
Doctoral (Research)	-66		-3	
DNP	3,519	<0.001	1043	<0.001

* Bold values indicate a statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) average change per year.

- The number of *generic (entry-level) baccalaureate* students increased by 25.8 percent in the past five years from 197,493 in 2016 to 248,440 in 2020. There was an overall average increase of 12,136 ($p < 0.001$) students per year (Table 21). Graduates also increased from 2016 to 2020 by 22.3 percent. Although the dramatic rise in enrollments and the increase in graduations over the past five years are encouraging, many more baccalaureate-prepared nurses will be needed to meet the healthcare needs of the population.
- The number of master's enrollees increased by 19.5 percent in 2016-2020. Graduations also increased by 28.1 percent in 2016-2020 (Table 23).
- At the doctoral (research-focused) level, enrollment decreased by 5.9 percent over the past five years. Graduations decreased by 2.2 percent between 2016 and 2020 (Table 24).
- The number of DNP enrollees increased by 56.3 percent in 2016-2020. Graduations also increased by 88.3 percent in 2016-2020 (Table 25).

MASTER'S PROGRAMS

- In fall 2020 there were 1,038 institutions with baccalaureate and/or graduate programs in nursing in the United States and its territories. Nationwide, 636 (61.2%) institutions offered *master's* programs; of these, 406 (63.8%) offered *master's-level NP* programs and 63 (9.9%) offered *master's-level CNS* programs. The AACN database contains data on 608 (95.6%) institutions with *master's* programs, 393 (96.8%) schools with *master's-level NP* programs, and 34 (96.8%) institutions with *CNS* programs (Table 1b).

MASTER'S-LEVEL ENROLLMENT AND GRADUATIONS BY MAJOR AREA OF STUDY

- *NP* majors accounted for 62.2 percent (94,751 students) of *master's* enrollees, and 57.6 percent of *master's* graduates ($N = 29,587$). *CNS* majors comprised 0.5 ($N = 774$) and 0.5 ($N = 254$) percent of *master's* enrollees and graduates, respectively (Table 26).
- Administration comprised 12.9 percent of *master's* enrollees, followed by education (12.3%), generalist (3.5%), informatics (2.5%), clinical nurse leader (1.4%), nurse midwifery (1.1%), and nurse

anesthesia (0.9%) majors. Administration graduates accounted for 16.5 percent of master's graduates, followed by education (12.5%), generalist (4.3%), informatics (2.4%), clinical nurse leader (1.7%), and nurse anesthesia (1.7%) majors (Table 26).

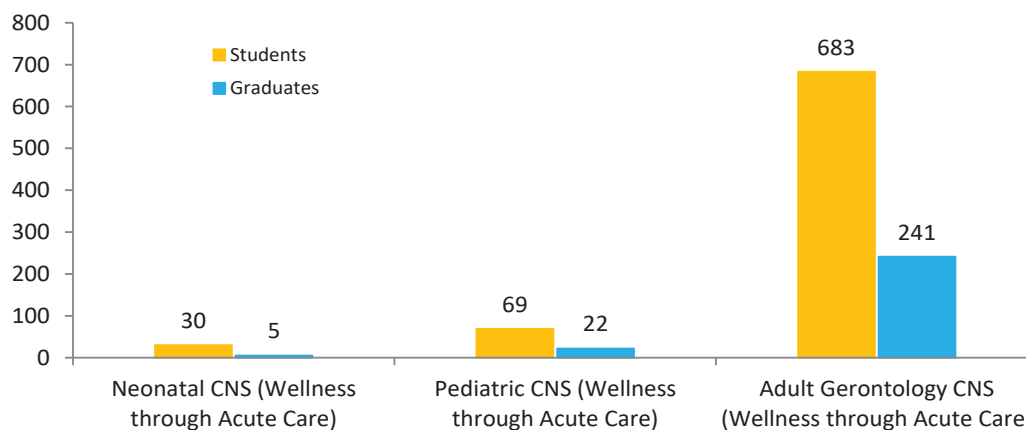
MASTER'S-LEVEL CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALIST ENROLLMENT (FALL 2020) AND GRADUATIONS (AUGUST 1, 2019 TO JULY 31, 2020) BY POPULATION FOCUS

- Fall 2020 enrollment in *master's-level and post-master's clinical nurse specialist (CNS)* programs totaled 797. Graduations/completions from these programs totaled 283 (Tables 28a and 29).
- Master's *Adult Gerontology (Wellness through Acute Care)* comprised 81.8 percent of CNS enrollees, followed by *Pediatric (Wellness through Acute Care, 8.8%)* and *Neonatal (Wellness through Acute Care, 3.6%)*. The proportions for graduations of these three population foci were 84.6, 7.5, and 2.0 percent, for each (Table 28a).
- No national CNS-specific certification examination existed for 5.8 percent of master's enrollees and 5.9 percent of master's graduates for their respective population focus (Tables 28a and 28b).

POST-MASTER'S CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALIST (CNS) ENROLLMENT AND COMPLETIONS BY POPULATION FOCUS

- *Adult Gerontology (Wellness through Acute Care)* accounted for the largest percentage of *post-master's CNS* enrollees (94.3%) and completions (89.7%, Table 29).

Master's- and Post-Master's Clinical Nurse Specialist Population Foci Comprising the Largest Percentage of Enrollees and Graduates.



Note: Information in this report concerning clinical nurse specialists is the result of an agreement between the American Association of Colleges of Nursing and the National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists. All clinical nurse specialist data are jointly owned by the two organizations.

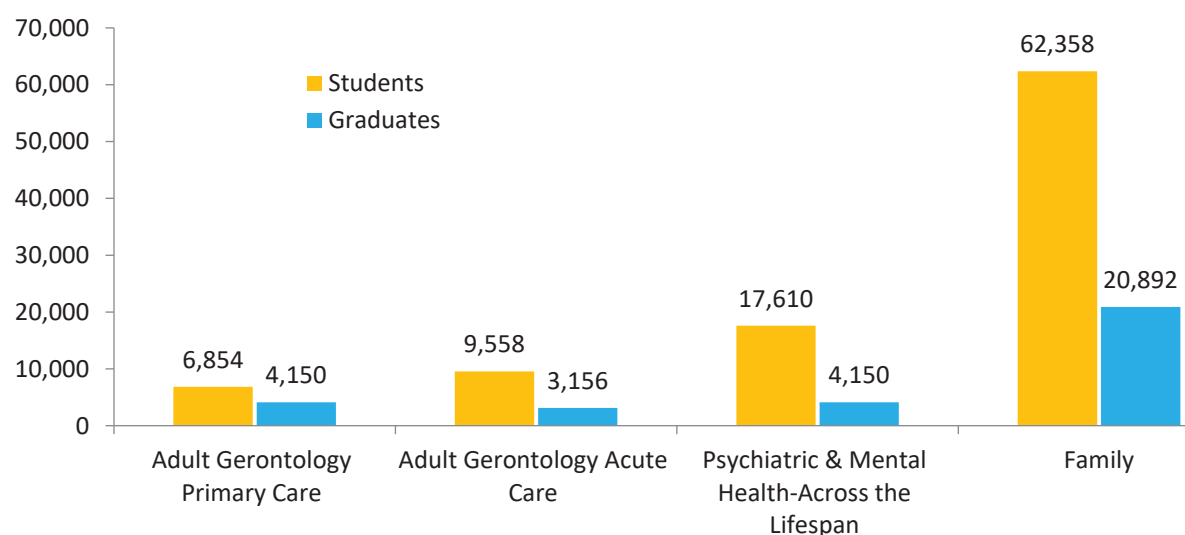
MASTER'S-LEVEL NURSE PRACTITIONER ENROLLMENT (FALL 2020) AND GRADUATIONS (AUGUST 1, 2019 TO JULY 31, 2020) BY POPULATION FOCUS

- Fall 2019 enrollment in *master's-level* and *post-master's nurse practitioner (NP)* programs totaled 103,276; and *Master's-level* NP enrollees comprised 91.7 percent of all master's and post-master's NP enrollees (Tables 31a and 32).
- There were 33,180 *master's* and *post-master's NP* graduations/completions from August 1, 2019 to July 31, 2020; and *master's-level* programs accounted for 89.2 percent of graduates (Tables 31a and 32).
- Master's *family* (63.1%), *psychiatric & mental health-across the lifespan* (14.4%), *adult gerontology acute care* (9%), and *adult gerontology primary care* (6.7%) accounted for the largest percentages of the 94,751 *master's NP* students (Table 31a).

POST-MASTER'S NURSE PRACTITIONER ENROLLMENT AND COMPLETIONS BY POPULATION FOCUS

- Of the 8,525 *post-master's NP* students, 46.2 percent were enrolled in *psychiatric & mental health-across the lifespan* NP programs, followed by *family* (30.3%), *adult gerontology acute care NP* (12.1%), and *adult gerontology primary care* (6.4%). The proportions for completions of these four population foci were 40.9, 33.3, 13.8, and 6.3 percent, for each (Table 32).

Master's-Level and Post-Master's Nurse Practitioner Population Foci Comprising the Largest Percentages of Enrollees and Graduates.



Note: Information in this report pertaining to nurse practitioners is the result of a collaborative effort between the American Association of Colleges of Nursing and the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties. All nurse practitioner data are jointly owned by the two organizations.

ENROLLMENT AND GRADUATIONS IN DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE (DNP) PROGRAMS BY MAJOR AREA OF STUDY

- For students and graduates entered in DNP programs at the post-baccalaureate level, NP majors accounted for the largest percent of enrollees (75.1%, 16,947 students) and graduates (75%, 3,139 graduates, Table 35).
- For students and graduates entered in DNP programs at the post-master's level, *leadership* accounted for 37.1 percent of enrollees, followed by NP (25.6%), *major area not specified* (22.3), and *administration/management* DNP (3.9%). The proportions for graduations of these four majors were 33.9, 26, 25.3, and 3.9 percent, respectively (Table 35).

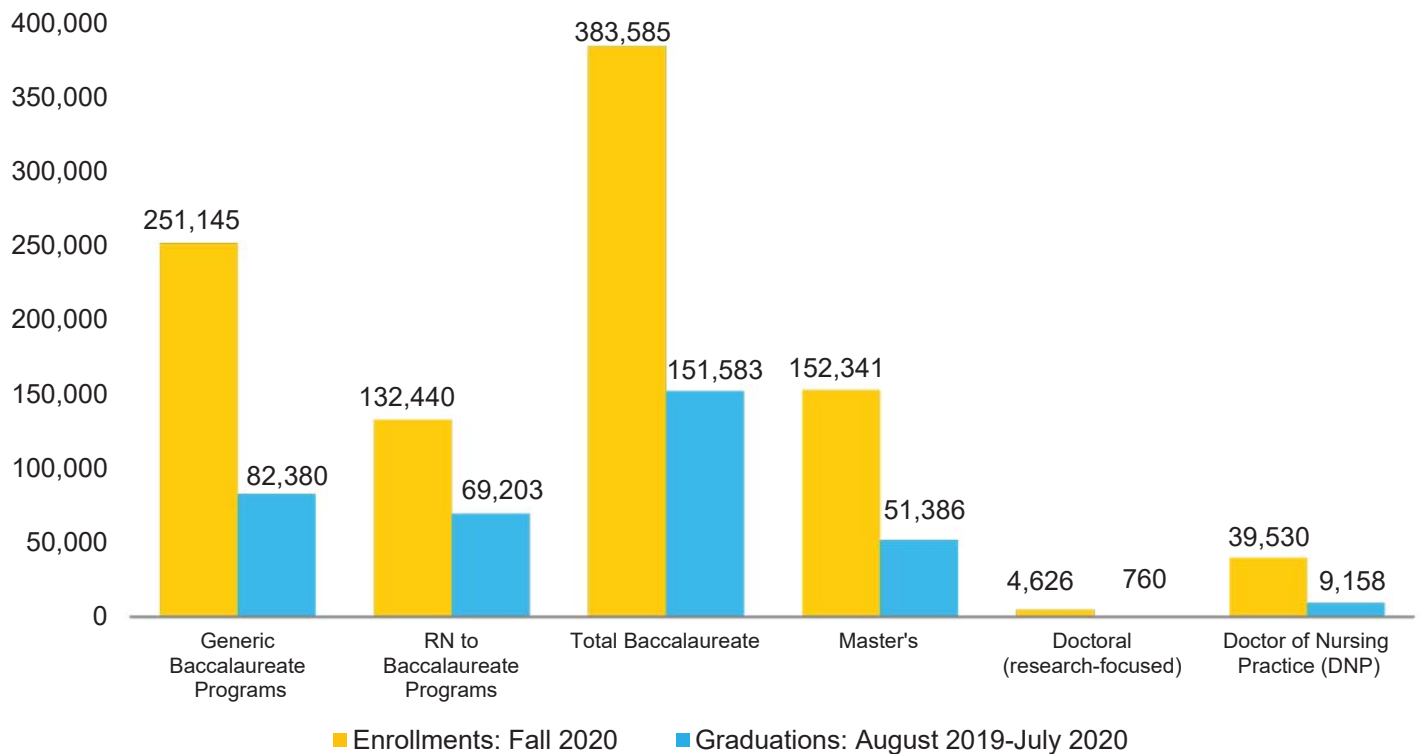
ENROLLMENT AND GRADUATIONS IN NURSE PRACTITIONER-FOCUSED DNP PROGRAMS

- For students and graduates entered in NP-focused DNP programs at the post-baccalaureate level, *family* (55.2%), *psychiatric & mental health-across the lifespan* (13%), *adult gerontology acute care* (10.7%), and *adult gerontology primary care* (7.9%) NP population foci accounted for the largest percentages of the 16,947 students (Table 36).
- For students and graduates entered in NP-focused DNP programs at the post-master's level, most students and graduates are in the category *Previously Certified as NP* (56.4%, 2,350 students; 74.3%, 943 graduates), which indicates that students and graduates already had an NP certification and will not seek a new NP certification in their DNP education (Table 36).

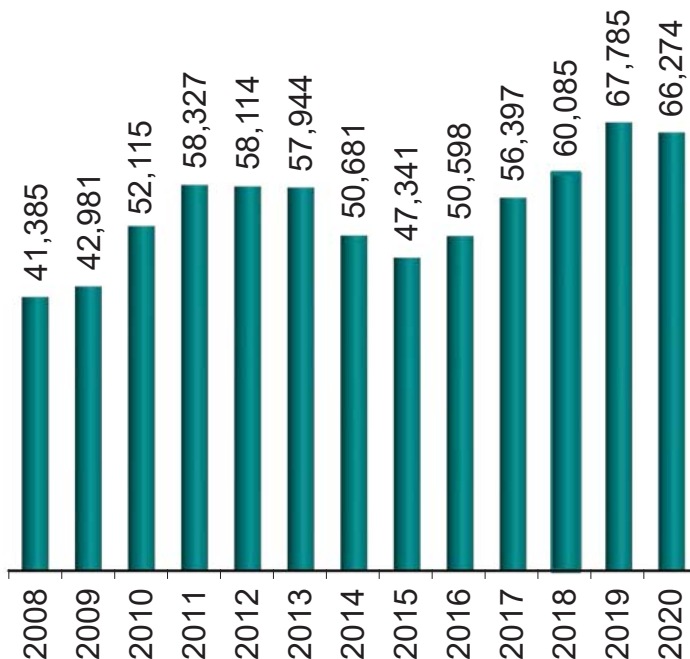
Key Indicators and Trends

Enrollment and Graduations in Nursing Programs

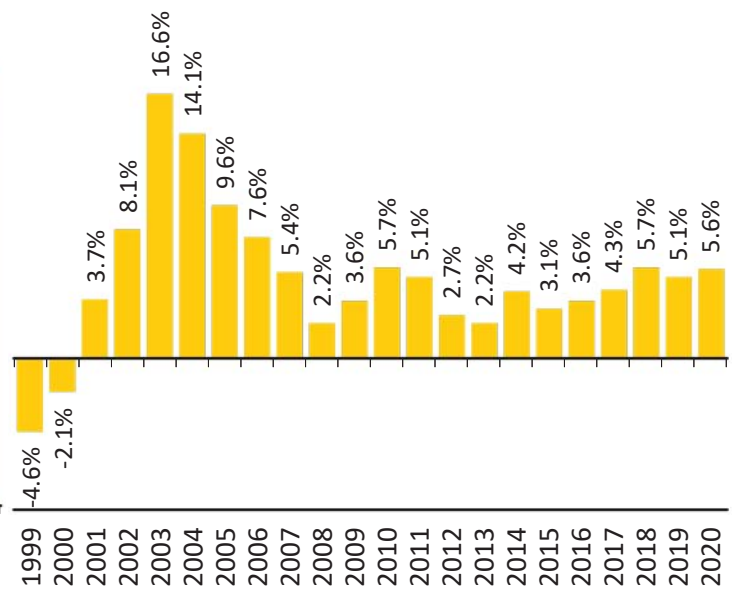
956 Schools



Qualified Applications Turned Away from Entry-Level Baccalaureate Nursing Programs: 2008-2020

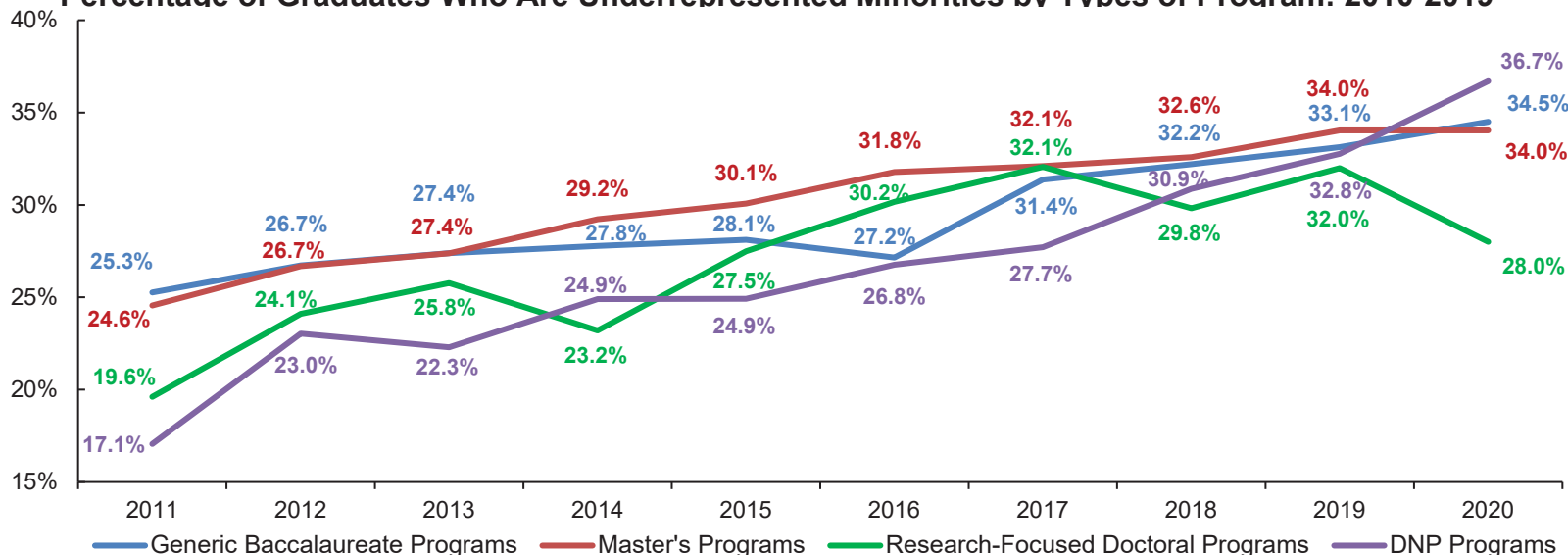


Percentage Change in Enrollments in Entry-Level Baccalaureate Nursing Programs: 1999-2020

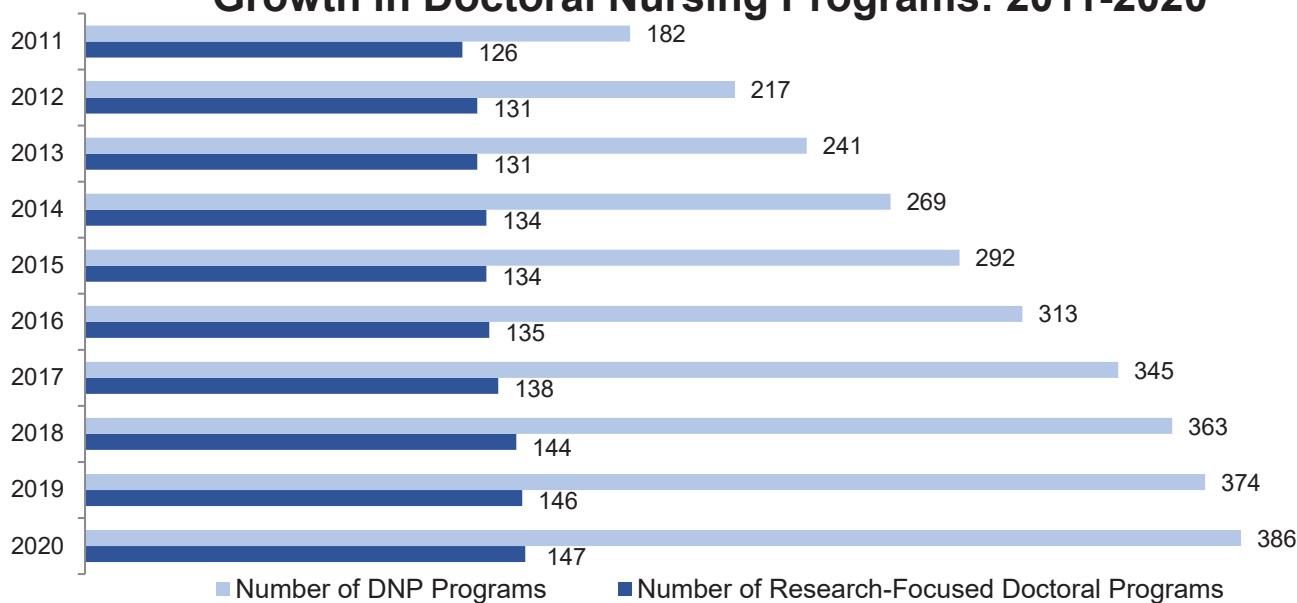


Racial/Ethnic Diversity in Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Education

Percentage of Graduates Who Are Underrepresented Minorities by Types of Program: 2010-2019



Growth in Doctoral Nursing Programs: 2011-2020



Enrollments in Doctoral Programs: 2011-2020

