



RUSH MEDICAL COLLEGE • COLLEGE OF NURSING • COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES • THE GRADUATE COLLEGE

# A Primer on Using NursingCAS as Part of the Holistic Admissions Process

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# What type of student are we looking for?

- Academically qualified, diverse candidates who will find caring for others rewarding and have a strong interest in the biological sciences
- Candidates who are comfortable with the psychological and physical intimacy of nursing
- Our successful students, the ones who have become exceptional nurses, have a strong combination of cognitive and affective characteristics.

# Status of Workforce Diversity



|                        | <u>US Nursing Workforce</u> | <u>US Population</u> |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| Black/African Amer.    | 5.4%                        | 13.1%                |
| Hispanic/Latino        | 3.6                         | 16.9                 |
| Indian/Alaskan Native  | 0.3                         | 1.2                  |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 5.8                         | 5.3                  |
| Multi-Racial           | 1.7                         | 2.4                  |
| Male                   | 9.6                         | 49                   |

Over all surveyed ethnicities, white, non-Hispanic nurses comprise 83.2% as compared to 61.1% of the US population

# Are We Making Any Progress?

- Though 30% of the US population is either African-American or Hispanic, only 18% of the students enrolled in BSN programs constitute these underrepresented groups (AACN Annual Report, 2014).
- A report from the U.S. Census Bureau projects that non-Hispanic whites will no longer make up the majority of the population by 2043.
- The % of men currently enrolled in BSN programs is 11.4% and 10.3% in Master's programs. At present, men represent 7% of the U.S. nursing workforce (AACN Annual Report, 2014).
- Men comprise over 49% of the population. Genetics tells us this will continue to be the case for the foreseeable future.

# Building the Diversity Pyramid



# Building the Diversity Pyramid

- A pyramid provides a way to construct a model for diversity planning that is suited to the institution.
- To create a diversity initiative one must begin with foundational components that will support the next level of necessary and critical elements.

# Starting Point Assessment

- Has my school set diversity goals?
- Is there a culture at my institution that actually promotes diversity?
- What useful strategies has my school been using?
- What resources do we need to meet our goals?

# The Foundation of the Pyramid: Establishing a Base to Build On

The necessary foundational base is a tangible organizational commitment to attracting and retaining diverse students. Clear, objective, and measurable diversity goals must be a part of the organization's strategic plan.

# This entails:

- Having organizational buy-in; it is imperative if human and capital resources are to be expended for tactical planning and implementation to increase diversity.
- School admission policies that reflect diversity, defined in its broadest sense, as a criterion that is considered during the admissions process.
- Retention strategies – Mentorship, proactive academic assistance, welcoming cultural climate.

# Core Principle of Holistic Review Admission Process

Selection criteria for admission are:

- Broad-based
- Clearly linked to school-specific mission and goals
- Promote diversity as an essential element to achieving institutional excellence

Benefits of diversity extend beyond education:

- Increases access to health care
- Accelerates advances in research
- Provision of more effective and culturally competent care

# The Holistic Admissions Review

Holistic review is a flexible, individualized way of assessing an applicant's capabilities. Balanced consideration is given to the applicant's:

- Experiences
- Attributes
- Academic Metrics

These elements are considered in combination with how the individual might contribute value as a health professions student and future health professional.

# Applicant Criteria: EAM Framework

Experiences: Educational and employment background, “distance travelled”, leadership roles, community service, and life, health care, and research experience.

Attributes: Applicant’s personal and professional characteristics, skills, and abilities such as age, race, ethnicity, SES, gender, sexual orientation, geographic location, family status, leadership, interpersonal style, values, maturity, motivation, language spoken, field of study, commitment, resilience, etc.

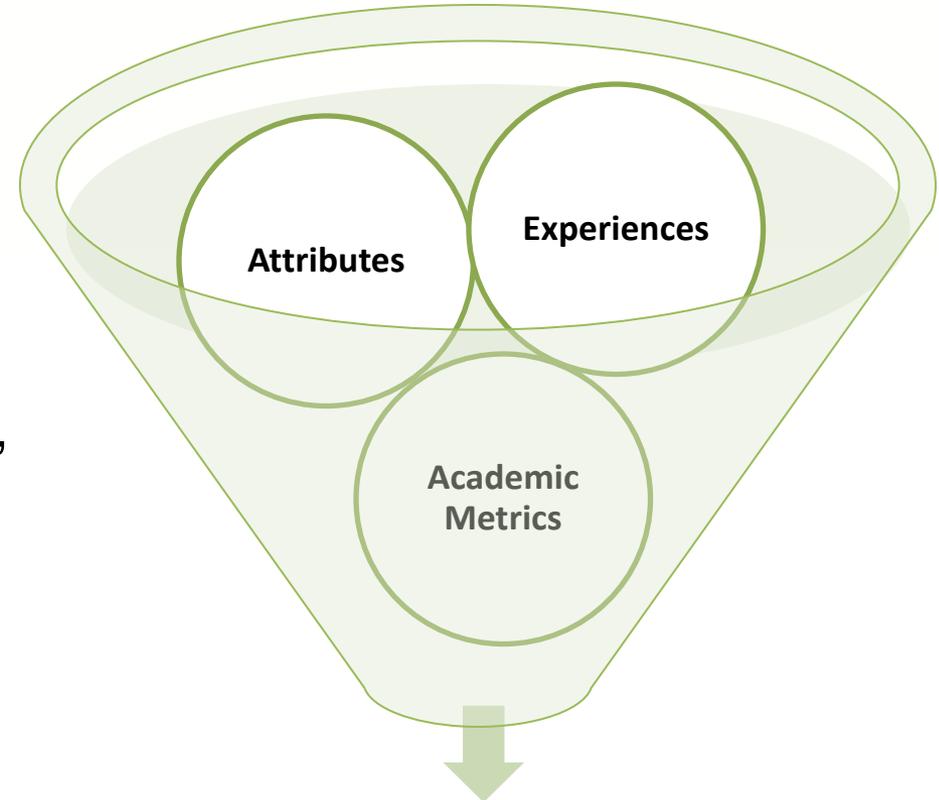
Metrics: Quantitative academic components of the applicant’s portfolio, e.g., GPAs, GRE.

# Conducting a Holistic Review

- Supports considering ALL the ways an applicant might contribute to the learning environment and healthcare;
- Facilitates identifying a broadly diverse student body, which contributes to an enriched learning environment for ALL students and a better prepared health care workforce;
- Encourages thinking deeply about what experiences, attributes, and academic metrics are most important for students and future health care professionals, as well as how to sustain a learning environment that fosters these characteristics.

# Holistic Review in Admissions

These three elements are easy to review and integrate in NursingCAS due to the way applicant data can be visualized, the various GPA calculations, customized essay, CV review, etc.



To do a holistic admissions process involves the comprehensive review of different kinds of information. The collection and presentation of that information is done by NursingCAS in a way that makes it easy for a faculty member to synthesize.

# Data Points in NursingCAS to Conduct a Holistic Admissions Review

In NursingCAS you can:

- Review academic qualifications – GPAs, GRE if required, science grades, schools attended, etc.
- Tailor essay questions to learn about applicants in a specific way.
- Develop custom questions to discern if applicants come from a disadvantaged or rural background
- Review applicant's uploaded CV to note extracurricular activities and community service
- Evaluate uploaded recommendations.
- Create and review interview rating and comments.

# Interview Process and Form

- Interview is 30 min. – 20 min. for interview questions, 10 min. for questions (roughly)
- Ask all of the form questions but do pursue other lines of inquiry as they arise
- Complete the NursingCAS rating and comments section with enough detail so others know the basis of your decision

# Sample “diversity” interview questions

“All students can contribute to the creation of a diverse and inclusive environment when diversity is defined most broadly. Whether by a personal attribute, characteristic, culture, experience or behavior, please tell us how you believe you will contribute to the diversity of Rush.”

“Working with people from different backgrounds or cultures can be complex. Can you tell us about a time when you were challenged to adapt to people from different backgrounds or cultures from your own? What did you do to resolve the situation?”

“In what areas do you anticipate you will excel and conversely be challenged in the DNP Program?”

# NursingCAS

- 38% of applicants to NursingCAS are URM
- Diverse applicants from across the country are exposed to your program
- In-progress applicants can be e-mailed with scholarship and other relevant messaging.
- Simple spreadsheets can be generated for easy comparison of applicants.

# Findings from a National Survey

A survey, Holistic Admissions in the Health Professions, was conducted by Urban Universities for Health, September 2014, to evaluate the use and outcomes of the holistic admissions process by health professions schools.

Percent of schools that self-report using holistic review, by primary degree program:

DDS: 93%

MD: 91%

MPH: 82%

PharmD: 78%

BSN: 47%

# NON-ACADEMIC CRITERIA ASSESSED

- First generation college student
- Experience with disadvantaged populations
- Socioeconomic status
- Origin in a community that is medically underserved
- Origin in a geographic area specifically targeted by school
- Race/ethnicity (if permitted by state law)
- Foreign language ability
- Gender
- Focus on underserved rural or urban communities
- Mission specific focus – research, primary care, global health

All of the identified non-academic criteria can be found in NursingCAS through:

- Already created demographic fields
- Custom question development
- Focused, school-specific essay questions
- Interviewer rating and comments
- Complete uploaded interview forms
- Completion of school-specific created rubric

# Middle Level of the Pyramid: Creating an Affordable Education

- Grants
- Endowed scholarships and set-asides
- Personal assistance through financial aid process

The middle level of the pyramid is about dedicated scholarships and adequate financial aid for diverse students.

The top of the pyramid contains all of the media and relational strategies necessary to build a pipeline of diverse students to your college, specifically designed to your program, market and organization.