

THE REASONS GIVEN BY  
FIFTY-SIX NURSING STUDENTS FOR CHOOSING  
THE ASSOCIATE DEGREE NURSING PROGRAM  
AT CLARK COLLEGE

by

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background of the Problem

Among professional leaders in the field of nursing increasing recognition has been given to the need for classification of nursing functions of varying levels. It is felt that functions should therefore be divided into three basic categories: professional, semi-professional, and assisting. The National League for Nursing states that 67 percent of the positions filled by registered nurses of the second category are in hospitals and doctors' offices where "supervision is available and expected." (23) Most of the nursing is carried on by the semi-professional group. It is the semi-professional group that will provide the projected 1970 minimum goal of 300 nurses for each 100,000 population suggested by the Surgeon General's Consultant Group on Nursing. (26)

The educational programs designed for preparation in the three basic categories vary widely. The baccalaureate program is designed to provide the broad educational background for professional nursing in hospitals, public health departments, and other community agencies. It also forms the basis for further education in preparation for teaching, for supervision, for administration, and for consultive services. (4)

The semi-professional nurse has been prepared in the traditional three-year-hospital-school. These hospital controlled schools of



nursing largely conduct apprenticeship-type programs where nursing service needs dominate nursing education. Formerly these schools were the recognized means of preparation for all nurses at staff level positions. (7;4)

The newest pattern of nursing education at the semi-professional level is the associate degree program. The traditional patterns of nursing education, that is the diploma school and the collegiate programs, are older and better known than is the associate degree program in nursing education.

There are two possible motivating forces for the advent of this new type of program. One is that nursing education should be geared into the nations' system of higher education" as was recommended by Esther Lucile Brown in 1948. (5) The second reason is that when an educational institution takes the responsibility for nursing education, the laboratory experience can be selected to meet the educational objectives rather than nursing service needs, and thus the length of time for preparation can be reduced appreciably. (5)

As previously stated there is a wide variation in the educational programs preparing nurses for each of the three basic categories and a choice must therefore be made by the individuals as to which program will best meet their needs.

The greatest supply of student nurses comes from recent high school graduates, therefore, it is wise to look at the adolescent as one making career choices. Eli Ginzberg in Occupational Choice draws attention to adolescence as the period in life when people make an

occupational choice. (12)

This is the period when the individual is still developing, both intellectually and emotionally. (12) Unfortunately, he must make a choice when he is often undergoing deep-seated emotional experiences. Few young people understand the complex nature of society. Ginzberg asks, "How can the adolescent be expected to make a wise career choice at such a confusing time in his life?"

In Jersild's Psychology of Adolescence, Phoebe Overstreet Nichols has written "Vocational Development." She agrees with Ginzberg by saying that tentative choices are characteristic of adolescence while realistic choices usually begin in early adulthood. (14) The adolescent is most likely to be in the exploratory stage. Over half of 845 high school senior girls in Mary Flowers' study of factors influencing high school girls in Seattle to accept or reject nursing as a career, said that at one time they wanted to be a nurse. (10) Actually only 49 finally chose nursing which indicates a high rate of indecision. Mary Elizabeth Flowers wrote A Study of the Influence of Selected Factors Upon the Decision of Seattle High School Senior Girls Concerning Nursing as a Career, an unpublished thesis, as part of the requirements for a Master of Science at the University of Washington in 1952. Her findings support Ginzberg's and Nichols' statement that the adolescent is labile and uncertain in selection of a career.

Studies have been done regarding the reasons for selecting a career in nursing, and reasons for selecting the diploma or collegiate programs in particular, but little has been done to find out why

students choose associate degree programs. This is to be expected because of the relative newness of the latter. Studies have shown that choice of a specific school of nursing depends largely upon: (1) proximity of the school to the student's residence; (2) contact by the student with graduates of the school; (3) cost; and (4) length of the program. (7, 10, 20, 25)

#### Statement of the Problem

The problem presented in this study is to determine the personal and environmental factors which influenced 56 students in their choice of the Associate Degree Nursing Program at Clark College.

#### Limitations of the Study

The study includes the information that was obtained from the 56 interviews with the students presently enrolled in the Associate Degree Nursing Program at Clark College in the Winter of 1965 and personal information obtained from examination of their records.

#### Sources of Data

The primary source of data was obtained by interviewing each of the 56 students enrolled in the first and second year classes of the Associate Degree Nursing Program at Clark College during the Winter term 1965. Additional pertinent information was obtained from the student records at Clark College. The secondary sources of data are provided by selected books, selected periodicals and related studies.

### Assumptions

For purposes of this study it was assumed that:

1. The students would be willing to answer accurately the questions asked by the interviewer.
2. The students had received some general pre-entrance information regarding the requirements and characteristics of various nursing programs, and therefore the element of choice entered into their decision to choose the Associate Degree Program at Clark College.

### Importance of the Study

Studies seem to indicate that students pay insufficient attention to the type of nursing program they choose. (7, 17) Most of them have too little knowledge of nursing programs beyond the one they select. (7, 17)

It is important to determine if prospective nurses are choosing the Associate Degree Program at Clark College for the right reasons. That is, if their choices are based on a realistic appraisal of what a two-year technical nursing program offers them in considering their own personal and environmental background.

### Steps of the Study

The steps whereby this study was carried out may be described as follows:

1. A review of related literature was done to gain information about factors which influence the choice of a specific

nursing school.

2. Purposes of the study were formulated.
3. An interview guide was developed to elicit reasons for the choice of the associate degree program by the students presently enrolled. Each part of the guide was developed in relation to the purposes of the study.
4. The interview guide was validated by using it on graduates of the Associate Degree Program at Clark College to see if the questions were pertinent and to gain experience in using it.
5. Permission to do the study was obtained from the president of Clark College and the director of the nursing program.
6. The interviews were conducted.
7. Pertinent data were obtained from individual student records.
8. Data obtained for the interviews were tabulated in the Data-Processing Department at Clark College.
9. The study was summarized, conclusions drawn, and recommendations made.

#### Overview of Subsequent Chapters

Chapter II consists of a review of the literature and related studies. Chapter III contains a history of the local program, Chapter IV contains a report of the study, the findings, and an analysis of the data, and Chapter V contains a summary of this study, conclusions and recommendations for further study.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE AND RELATED STUDIES

#### Historical Background

Mildred Montag in The Education of Nursing Technicians points out that to appreciate the role of the technician or semi-professional person in nursing, it is advisable to look at the role of the technician in engineering. (16) Engineering has experimented with the use of many workers with different levels of training including on-the-job trained construction workers, technicians, and the professional engineer with broad educational preparation. The Office of Education in Higher Education for American Democracy stated that for every professional engineer there is need for ten to fifteen technicians. (22) In many fields for every four-year professional there is a need for five times as many two-year trained technicians. The community college, according to the President's Commission on Higher Education should provide the training for the more numerous technical jobs. (22)

Following World War II the New York Board of Regents developed its "Post War Plan For Education in the State of New York." (16) Provision was made for a series of Regional Institutes of Applied Arts and Sciences to give preparation for technical and semi-professional positions. This step was taken after the Regents had surveyed twenty-eight industries which showed that 10 percent of total employment was in technical positions. According to Montag in The Education of Nursing Technicians, a similar survey of medicine showed the need for

technicians. (16) Montag concluded that a similar statement could be made regarding the need for technicians in nursing. Nursing Outlook, April 1964, contained an article by Mary Tschudin, Dean of the School of Nursing at the University of Washington, in which she emphasized the point that "differentiation of function has become a necessary and desirable corollary of the complex, technologically, and rapidly changing world in which we live." (27) She further states "It is necessary to distinguish between professional and technical education and to begin to concentrate on strengthening each of these types of nursing education." She continued saying that, "by recognizing the differences in character and level of education, the kinds of ability required for successful completion, the functions for which each can and should prepare, we may attract to nursing a much broader segment of the population than we are now doing." (27)

Esther Lucile Brown, a well-known sociologist who undertook a survey of present health services for the Russell Sage Foundation in 1948, reported in Nursing for the Future that technicians are not less competent than professionals but have "specialized efficiency" which enables them to do an excellent job which astounds professionals. (5) Technicians have an important task but the scope is narrower and requires less administrative ability. They function on a team with the professional worker. (5, 16) In Community College Education for Nursing, Montag concluded that if it is assumed that the great volume of nursing is done by the semi-professional nurse, the need for nursing technicians is apparent. (15) This implies the use of a nursing staff

composed of people with varying levels of preparation. This is economically desirable and feasible. The professional nurse, with the broad educational background gained in the university, would head a team that deals with a great variety of nursing functions as envisaged by Margaret Bridgman in Collegiate Education for Nursing. (4) The skilled nursing technicians would carry the greatest load of nursing functions which, while requiring skill and understanding, do not demand the level of responsibility assumed by the professional nurse. They would, in turn, be supported by on-the-job-trained aides who perform the more routine nursing functions.

There are several factors which have caused the increased demand for qualitative and quantitative nursing service. Mildred Montag, in The Education of Nursing Technicians, points out that one of these factors is the increased reliance on technological innovations such as computers to monitor vital signs of patients following heart attacks and heart and chest surgery; radioactive isotopes for blood dyscrasias and malignant tumors; kidney machines; and heart-valve replacements. All of these require complex technical skills too numerous for the nurse alone to handle without assistance from trained technicians. (16) Still another factor, according to Margaret Bridgman in Collegiate Education for Nursing, is the greatly increased life expectancy which has increased the population of the very young and the very old. (7) With greater numbers of elderly there is a greater incidence in the number who have chronic diseases and consequently a greater need for nursing services. Chemotherapy has increased the number of people who



can be treated for otherwise incurable diseases thus increasing the demand for nursing services. Esther Lucile Brown states that the greatest demand for nursing services has resulted from increased use of hospital insurance and health and welfare benefits in industry. (9)

The greater need for nurses is increasingly emphasized in current literature. The disparity between supply and demand continues to increase as indicated by the 1962 fall enrollment in all three nursing programs reported in the 1964 edition of Facts About Nursing, a statistical summary published by the American Nurses' Association. On October 15, 1962, it reported the enrollment of schools of nursing in the United States and Puerto Rico for the three types of programs as : 95,278 students in the diploma programs, 4,927 students in the associate degree programs, and 23,656 students in the baccalaureate programs. (2) In 1963, The Surgeon General's Consultant Group on Nursing in their report, Toward Quality in Nursing proposed a goal of 850,000 professional nurses in 1970. (26) Facts About Nursing suggests the "more realistic goal" of 680,000 since the nursing schools have not been able to keep up with the demand. (2)

How can this gap between supply and demand be closed? What will be the source of increased enrollment in schools of nursing? The post-war population explosion has reached college age, hence there is a marked increase in the number of young people graduated from high school and enrolled in college. Donald Deyo, president of the American Association of Junior Colleges, in his address to their convention in May 1964, as reported in the Junior College Journal, stated that this

increase is particularly noticeable in the junior college. (8, page 6) He further stated that "the influential Education Policies Commission had recommended "a two-year extension of free, universal opportunity for education." He added that Secretary of Labor Willard Wirtz, had also suggested a two-year extension of free education beyond high school as a partial solution to the "two-million youths gutting the labor market." (8, page 10) The President's Commission on Higher Education described the junior college movement as "the fastest growing collegiate enterprise in America today." (22) The increased enrollment in the junior college could provide a potential supply of recruits to nursing by preparing nursing technicians in the junior college setting to help close the gap between supply and demand in the field of nursing. Facts About Nursing states that prior to 1959, nursing attracted six or seven percent of girl high school graduates. Since then nursing has attracted only five percent of that group each year. (2)

Inclusion of a nursing program in the community college is a natural development, since one of the basic functions of the community college is to meet the needs of its community for essential services, and "nursing is an essential service in every community," says Mildred Montag. (15)

Nurses for the West reports that recruitment to nursing has been largely aimed at high school graduates. It further says that this is unrealistic in the light of recent developments in working patterns of women. Young women are marrying earlier and leaving the labor force while "an increasing number of mature women who have no specific

training for skilled jobs, are entering the labor market." "The mature women entering the labor force constitute a major untapped source of the woman power available for nursing education." (19, page 10) The President's Commission on Higher Education emphasizes one of the functions of the junior college is to educate adults. (22)

In the "Foreward" of Mildred Montag's Community College Education for Nursing, R. Louise McManus, Director of Nursing Education at Teachers College, Columbia University, says that Montag's study has demonstrated that "the junior and community college can attract into nursing a desirable group who would not be able, because of age, family responsibility, or other factors, to enter other types of nursing programs, thus augmenting the numbers entering the profession as well as preparing them for service more quickly." (15)

In the same publication Mildred Montag reported on the experiment for developing the associate degree nursing program. (15) In 1952 an anonymous donation of \$110,000 was given to the division of Nursing Education at Teachers College, Columbia University, to launch the Co-operative Research Project in Junior and Community College Education for Nursing to test the feasibility of educating nursing students in the junior college setting. Later when the Institute of Research and Service in Nursing Education was established in March 1953, the Co-operative Research Project came under its administration. It was the first research project of this new department at Teachers College. A W.K. Kellogg Foundation Grant supplied funds for continuance of the project. Seven pilot projects were carefully selected in strategically

located areas throughout the country to insure their perpetuation. Two of the pilot projects were in the West, one at Pasadena City College in Pasadena, California and one at Weber College in Ogden, Utah.

The staff of the Cooperative Research Project not only provided consultive services to the pilot programs but each staff member carried on his own research project for a doctoral dissertation or masters' thesis. One of the projects concerned administration of an associate degree program, another was in curriculum construction, a third was developing an evaluation tool for student evaluation, and the fourth and last was a plan for follow-up studies on the performance of the graduates of the pilot programs. The general pattern of the program had been established but the faculties of each pilot program constructed their own curriculum and were responsible for the course content. At the end of two calendar years or two academic years, according to the school program, the students would be ready to take the licensing examinations and "be prepared to become competent nurses rather than be fully competent." (15)

The curriculum of the associate degree program provides a nearly equal distribution between general and special education. One academic credit is given for each class hour and one credit for two or three hours of laboratory experience. The laboratory experience takes the place of the clinical experience of the traditional diploma program. The laboratory experience is selected and supervised by the nursing faculty of the community college to "provide meaningful learning without unnecessary repetition." (15)

The nursing specialties have been organized into a few comprehensive courses with a central theme or few common goals rather than many small specialty courses. Community resources for giving health services have been utilized by the program when the resources are available and when they can provide experiences which meet educational objectives. The faculty in the associate of arts nursing programs must meet the same educational requirements as the other faculty of the community college. (15)

The new type of program was designed to be terminal. However, graduates would be eligible for further professional education because their education was obtained in an institution of higher education making credits transferable. The associate degree graduate would be able to do bedside nursing under supervision implying some limitation of function as compared with the registered nurse with a broader background and more professional education.

Montag reported that the graduates of the pilot programs compared favorably with the graduates of the diploma schools of nursing in their ability to pass the licensing examinations. "The mean scores for the 192 pilot program graduates are higher on all of the five sections (of the state board examinations) than the mean scores for all the graduates of diploma programs." (15) Follow-up studies, a planned part of the Cooperative Research Project, of the graduates of the associate degree pilot programs showed no appreciable difference in performance from diploma school graduates. (15) Montag concluded that the Cooperative Research Project proved that the newest



pattern in nursing, the associate degree program, could prepare semi-professional personnel who could function adequately as bedside nurses and could pass the state licensing examinations. However, the achievement of 192 associate degree graduates should not be accepted as a widespread generalization. Those first students in the pilot project were no doubt carefully selected. The very close faculty-student ratio was possible only because of the experimental nature of the project. It would appear that the first students profited by certain unique features that may not have been possible to continue.

An editorial in Nursing Outlook of August 1959, "Education for Professional Nursing - 1958" indicated that it was still too early to speculate on the extent to which the Associate Degree Programs might close the gap between the number of new bedside nurses needed each year and the number being prepared. (9) In 1957-1958, 425 graduations represented a definite increase over the previous year's figure of 276 graduates, which was a small number compared to the 30,000 graduations from all preservice programs. The article commended the associate degree programs for the real contribution they have made to nursing because they have stimulated experimentation in nursing education. Facts About Nursing, 1964 Edition, reports that graduation from all programs showed an increase but the associate degree programs showed the greatest proportionate increase, 26.4 percent. (2) There were 4,927 students enrolled in Associate Degree Programs on October 15, 1962. (2)

### Review of Related Studies

Several studies have been done regarding the reasons for choosing a career and the reasons for choosing a specific school of nursing, diploma or collegiate, but very little is written regarding the reasons for choosing the relatively new associate degree nursing program. At Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., in 1952 Sister Bridget Creighton in Analysis of Factors which Influenced 360 Students in Their Choice of a Nursing Program reports that the cultural and ethnic background of the student determines her selection or rejection of a collegiate nursing program. (12) Questionnaires were administered to 290 freshman students enrolled in Catholic diploma schools and 90 freshman students attending Catholic collegiate schools located in mid-western cities. The education and occupations of parents of students in diploma and collegiate schools were compared. Sister Creighton found that 35.7 percent of the fathers and 27.1 percent of mothers of students in the collegiate program had attended college compared to 17.4 percent of the fathers and 12.1 percent of mothers of the diploma students. In the collegiate group 68.6 percent of the fathers were in the "white collar" occupational group while only 39.3 percent of the fathers of the non-collegiate students were in this group. Sister Creighton reported that 78 percent of the students in the diploma program would still choose the three-year program even if scholarships had been available for the collegiate program. Of the 78 percent, 13 percent were not familiar with the collegiate program which they felt was "too difficult" and prepared "specialists." They gave cost as the

main reason for choice of the diploma program. The collegiate students chose their program because it would "best prepare them for nursing." Sister Creighton mentioned that 13.2 percent of the diploma students stated that they had not received much information about the collegiate program and she felt that in light of that fact they could not make a meaningful choice.

In A Study of the Influence of Selected Factors upon the Decision of Seattle High School Girls Concerning Nursing as a Career Mary Flowers reports the factors which led 845 senior girls to accept or reject nursing as a career. (17) The number represented 51 percent of the young women who were to graduate from Seattle high schools in June of 1951. She found a positive correlation between prestige accorded nursing and its selection as a vocation. About 50 percent of the girls had followed a high school program which did not include the subjects necessary for acceptance to a school of nursing. Of the total number 471 said that at one time they had wanted to be a nurse. Of the 66 girls who chose nursing as a career over half or 49 chose a school of nursing in Seattle, which verifies that proximity to a school of nursing is an important factor in choice of a school of nursing. She also found that analysis of the high school grade point averages revealed that nursing was not attracting a large percentage of students with superior grade point averages. Interesting contrasts might be found in a repetition of this study in 1965 with the greater emphasis on academic achievement in all college preparation programs throughout the country.

In her study The Expressed Motives for Choice of a School of



Nursing by 411 First Year Nursing Students at Catholic University of America at Washington, D.C. in 1951, Sister Mary Nesline found that analysis of the questionnaires of 411 students confirmed Sister Creighton's opinions that cultural, economic, and educational background of parents influence the choice of a collegiate or diploma nursing program. (17) The students in the collegiate programs felt they would "gain more experience under better-prepared faculty." The diploma students mentioned cost, shorter program, and a diploma program was "all that was necessary to be a nurse." The cost factor assumes less importance today in view of the rapidly increasing cost of nursing education in diploma schools.

Marjorie S. O'Connell in A Study of Factors which Influenced a Selected Group of Student Nurses to Choose a Nursing Career and Select A Specific School of Nursing reported that she administered a questionnaire to 316 freshman nursing students in seven Oregon nursing schools in September 1956. (20) Three were degree schools and four were diploma schools. She reported a 94.6 percent response. The chief reason for choosing a specific school of nursing was "to be with friends." She found the two main reasons for choosing a collegiate school were the "superior quality of instruction and greater experience." The students in the diploma programs gave as the three main reasons for selecting the diploma program "it best suited their needs and interest," "had been recommended by friends and relatives," or "was sponsored by my church." Seventy-five percent of the students were residents of Oregon. They mentioned cost and length of time as factors which

prevented them from choosing the collegiate program. Of the students 88 percent sought information about more than one school of nursing. However, as mentioned above, the increased cost of nursing education, particularly in the diploma schools, might change the responses if the study were repeated in 1965. The reasons most often mentioned for choosing a practical nurse program by 66 students in Marie Smith's thesis, A Study of Some Factors Which Influenced a Selected Group of Student Practical Nurses to Choose A Career in Practical Nursing, were: opportunity to work with people; it would provide them with a future income and security; and they had a long standing desire to be a nurse. (25) In her sample of seven Idaho practical nursing programs she found it included an equal number of women under 35 years of age and over 35 which was significant because recruitment to practical nursing is often geared to the older woman. It was reported that living in the community or within commuting distance of the school was probably a factor in choice of the school. Another factor was that 51.5 percent of the participants said they had previously worked in a hospital as nurses' aides.

In the California Associate Arts In Nursing Project -- Report Part II, there is a biographical description of 1,488 students in associate degree programs from 1957-1960. The Associate Arts In Nursing Project is a continuous project which originated from one of the original seven pilot programs at Pasadena City College, a part of the Cooperative Research Project described in Montag's Community College Education For Nursing. With funds provided by a grant from the W. K.

Kellog Foundation the California State Department of Education provides consultation services to the junior colleges to establish associate degree programs, to maintain quality programs, and to secure faculty.

One of the first activities of the Associate of Arts In Nursing Project was a comprehensive study of the nursing education facilities in the state of California. It continues to do studies in the associate degree programs and makes annual reports of its activities to the W. K. Kellog Foundation. (6)

A biographical summary of the students described in the Associate Arts In Nursing Project Report Part II follows:

1. Forty percent of the enrollees were over the average age of hospital school enrollees. These older students usually did well academically, and were likely to remain in employment in the community as their family life was often locally centered and established.
2. Thirty-nine percent were or had been married, and most of these persons have children. Many could not have attended another type of program in nursing due to family responsibilities.
3. Sixty-one percent of the replies about financial plans indicated some degree of self-support. This usually meant part-time work while attending school. The junior college program made this arrangement possible.
4. Eighty-four percent of the 1,488 students stated that the junior college program was especially suited to their individual needs. They liked the two-year length, the opportunity

to combine nursing and college; the program fit their financial needs, and it was possible to attend school and still live at home.

5. Fourteen percent had been in nursing before, an average of one year in a diploma program. (6)

The California study emphasizes that the objective of recruiting new population groups into nursing seems to be significantly achieved by the junior college program.

#### Summary of the Literature

Creighton and Nesline reported that the cultural and educational background of families influenced the students' selection or rejection of a collegiate program. O'Connell supported Creighton and Nesline in reasons for choosing the collegiate program for superior quality of education and stated that cost, length, and "suited interest" were given as reasons for choosing the diploma school. O'Connell found that the influence of relatives and friends, and church sponsorship were added reasons for choosing the diploma school program. All three found that proximity to the school was a deciding factor in selection of a nursing program. Mary Flowers and Marie Smith confirmed proximity of the educational institution to the home as a factor in selection of a nursing program. Marie Smith found that it was not necessarily the older woman who is attracted to practical nursing. The California study gave a biographical description of the associate degree students as having a substantial number in the upper age bracket, slightly over one third were married with children; it suited their financial needs.

Ginsberg and Jersild emphasized the lability and indecision of adolescence, a period when career choices are made.



## CHAPTER III

### HISTORY OF LOCAL PROGRAM

Clark College is a two-year community college which had an enrollment of 3,321 students in the fall of 1964. Slightly more than half of the students attend the day program and the remainder the evening program. It is located in Vancouver, Washington, a city of 36,683 in the Portland metropolitan area. It was established in 1933 in the old "Hidden Hall," at East 13th and Main Streets, with an enrollment of 25. After a number of moves, better financial backing was secured through state support, and the college was moved to larger, more adequate quarters in temporary wartime buildings outside the city.

In 1951 when it was a well-established college of 700 students Phyllis Bettsworth, a part-time nursing instructor in the evening program, began working tirelessly to establish a day-time practical nursing program using discarded equipment gathered from health agencies in the community. Shortly another faculty member, Bernice Jones, was added to the new practical nursing program. In 1953 Jean Hamilton joined the nursing staff as Director of Practical Nursing. In the fall of 1958 Clark College moved to a beautiful modern campus near the downtown area. The spacious Home Economics-Nursing Building housed a well equipped modern nursing laboratory as well as nutrition laboratory.

Several years planning by Dr. Lewis Cannell, Dean of Instruction, and Mrs. Jean Hamilton preceded the installation of the Associate Degree Nursing Program at Clark College. Mrs. Hamilton visited the pilot program at Weber College in Ogden, Utah. Later she attended a workshop for

curriculum development at The University of California at Berkeley, and another conference on nursing education in Los Angeles.

In 1957 the Washington State Board of Nursing sent word that before a two-year program could be eligible for accreditation, a thorough study of the plans would have to be made. Further, the Board stated that if this study brought favorable results, the Manual of the State Board of Registration would need to be revised. The local educators were told this study and revision would require about two years. In the meantime the plans for the new Associate Degree program lay dormant.

In 1959 the State Board of Nursing announced that the time was appropriate for the college to send a request for accreditation. This prompted immediate action. Mrs. Jean Hamilton was appointed Director of the Associate Degree Nursing Program and simultaneously faculty committees were chosen to work out the details. These included committees to plan curriculum, to set the philosophy and objectives of the course, and one to formulate student and faculty personnel policies. Many hours of work were put into the development of a solid curriculum with objectives that more than met the standards set forth in the principles for establishment of an associate degree program as developed by the committee from the National League for Nursing and the American Association of Junior Colleges.

To provide assistance to selected colleges that plan to conduct programs in nursing leading to an associate degree, the National League for Nursing has a special project which includes a one-week national conference annually and follow up consultation at each college by

members of the National League for Nursing staff. The first year the college is in the planning phase of the project the college president or his representative, and the nurse director attend the national conference. In subsequent years the director and a faculty member of the nursing department attend. Costs are borne by the National League for Nursing with money received from the Sealantic Fund, Incorporated. Six new colleges are brought into the project each year and Clark College was invited to participate in 1959. Even prior to this, concrete steps were taken in 1956 when Dr. Paul Gaiser, former president of Clark College, asked the state board of nursing to consider the possibility of establishing an associate degree program at Clark College. Since the practical nursing program was already using community agencies as clinical laboratories it facilitated the establishment of an associate degree program.

On January 26, 1960 the Washington State Board of Nursing granted the provisional accreditation to the Clark College Associate Degree Nursing Program, the first of its kind in the Northwest. The ground work had been thoroughly laid and the college was ready to select its first nursing faculty and its first nursing class. From the Practical Nursing Program, already established at Clark College, the new Associate Degree Program was able to draw its first staff members. Mrs. Jean Hamilton, R. N. Good Samaritan School of Nursing, Portland, Oregon, B. S. University of Washington, M. A. Oregon State College, became coordinator for the Associate Degree Nursing Program. She is presently chairman of the Nursing Department at Clark College which includes both



the Practical Nursing Program and the Associate Degree Program. During the first year she assisted as clinical instructor in nursing fundamentals and maternal and child health and taught professionals adjustments in medical surgical nursing during the final quarter.

Mrs. Phyllis Bettsworth, A. A. St. Helens Hall Junior College, R. N. Good Samaritan Hospital School of Nursing, Portland, Oregon, attended the University of Oregon School of Nursing Graduate Nurse Program during the first year of the associate degree program to obtain her B. S. in teaching and supervision in order to join the faculty as medical surgical nursing instructor. Several new members were recruited for the faculty to teach courses in psychiatric nursing, maternal and child health, and to supervise in the clinical area. All told there were five full-time and two part-time instructors.

The associate degree nursing education curriculum is seven quarters in length. It is comprised of slightly more than half nursing courses and slightly less than half general education courses. Students register for nursing each quarter and spend their laboratory time gaining clinical experience in hospitals, the health department, nursery schools, child guidance clinics, and other related agencies which contribute to the educational experiences of the students. The general education courses of the college are taken along with other college students throughout the seven quarters. A curriculum outline is found in Appendix D.

Clark College has a well equipped modern library of over 17,000 volumes and receives over 325 current periodicals and bulletins.

including, The American Journal of Nursing, Nursing Outlook, Nursing Research, Nursing Science, Journal of Psychiatric Nursing, American Journal of Public Health, Journal of Nursing Education, The Journal of Practical Nursing, The Practical Nurse Digest, and several health bulletins from the State of Washington which includes: Focus on Alcoholism, National Tuberculosis Association and bulletins from the Division of Mental Health from Washington State Department of Institutions.

All students entering Clark College fill out the Application for Admission to Washington Higher Institutions and take the Washington Pre-college Guidance Battery administered by the Guidance and Counseling Department. In addition the nursing students take the Strong Interest Inventory, The George Washington University Nursing Aptitude Test, Harrower Multiple Choice Rorschach Test (Group Rorschach), and the Thematic Apperception Test, and have a personal interview with the director of nursing education. They are required to have a pre-entrance medical and dental examination, and must have three personal references. They must have had a 2.0 grade point average in high school and have completed three units of English, two units of mathematics including algebra, and one unit of laboratory science selected from chemistry, biology or physics. (Chemistry is recommended as well as an additional science course and two units of a foreign language.) The total cost of the program is approximately \$639.25. A detailed analysis of the cost of the program is found in Appendix C.

From sixty-three applicants twenty-five were selected to begin the program on September 7, 1960. Ten students were between the ages of

seventeen and twenty-two, eleven between the ages of twenty-three and thirty-five, three between the ages of thirty-six and forty-one, and one was over fifty. There was one male student in the group. Of the twenty-six students fifty-six percent had a high school education and forty-four percent had some college credits. One had a Bachelor of Science Degree and one an Associate of Arts Degree. By the end of two years only fifteen remained of the original twenty-five.

The mean scores of the fifteen graduates in the five areas on the National League for Nursing Test Pool Examinations were:

Medical nursing.....	616.9
Surgical nursing.....	597.8
Obstetrical nursing.....	552.2
Pediatric nursing.....	567.4
Psychiatric nursing.....	569.4

The passing score in Washington is 350.

In medical and surgical nursing they had rated the highest in the state. By the end of the year all fifteen graduates of Clark College's first Associate Degree Program were in either full or part-time employment in staff nursing positions in hospitals or nursing homes in the Northwest. (23)

Since the Nurse Practice Acts in Washington had not designated the length of time for preparing registered nurses the two year associate degree program was permissible under the state laws. The State Board of Nursing revised the manual to clarify the licensing of the associate degree graduates. Since fifteen students had taken and successfully

passed the Washington State Board Examination in July 1963, the State Board of Nursing ruled "that any nurse passing the State Board Examinations and becoming registered in the State of Washington was to be considered as a registered nurse entitled to use the initials R. N. after her name".

In 1963 the second class of 19 students took and passed the State Board Examinations with the following mean scores in each of the five areas:

Medical nursing.....	512.5
Surgical nursing.....	548.1
Obstetrical nursing.....	500.4
Pediatrics nursing.....	494.31
Psychiatric nursing.....	535.8

In 1964 the graduating class did not do as well on the State Board Examinations. The mean scores for the five areas were as follows:

Medical nursing.....	490.5
Surgical nursing.....	510.5
Obstetrical nursing.....	494.35
Pediatric nursing.....	472.6
Psychiatric nursing.....	524.3

Five students of the 20 who took the State Board Examinations failed pediatric nursing. Of these five students, one student failed in all five areas, another failed in four areas. A sixth student failed only obstetrical nursing. All repeated the State Board Examinations and passed except for one who again failed pediatrics.

The school has graduated three classes. Current enrollment is 56 students. Expansion is contingent on locating additional clinical resources. The faculty consists of the chairman of the nursing department, six nurses, and one part-time assistant. Health classes, required by all except nursing students, are taught by the nursing faculty.

CHAPTER IV  
PROCEDURE AND FINDINGS

Procedure

The purpose of the study was to determine the factors which influenced the 56 students presently enrolled in the Associate Degree Nursing Program at Clark College to select that program. A review of the literature and related studies was made to discover what factors influenced the choice of a specific school of nursing. Many studies have been done to find the reasons for selecting nursing, but very few studies have been done regarding the reasons for choice of the relatively new associate degree program. Permission to do the study was obtained from the president of Clark College and the chairman of the nursing department. A copy of the letter to Dr. Baird is found in Appendix A.

An interview guide, constructed to elicit reasons for the choice of the associate degree program, was validated by testing it on graduates of the Clark College Associate Degree Nursing Program to see if the questions were pertinent and to gain experience in interviewing. The interview guide was submitted to the thesis adviser and revisions were made accordingly. A copy of the interview guide is found in Appendix B. Interviews were arranged with each of the students at a convenient time outside the classroom and were all completed within two weeks. Each interview lasted an average of 15 minutes, and one hundred percent participation was achieved.

Data obtained from the interviews were tabulated in the Data-Processing



Department at Clark College. A master tabulation of the raw data is found in Appendix E. A number was assigned to each interview guide to insure that the information remained confidential.

The student's records were examined for age, sex, marital status, number of children and school group, father's and mother's occupations and education, spouse's occupation and education, source of support while attending Clark College, education beyond high school, previous nursing experience and grade point average in high school.

### Findings

Table 1 indicates the exact number and percent in each age group.

Table 1. Number and Percent of Age Range of 56 Students in the Clark College Associate Degree Nursing Program 1965

Age Range	Number	Percent
18-21 years	20	37
22-25 years	18	32
26-31 years	4	7
32-41 years	10	17
50+	4	7
Total	56	100

Sixty-seven percent or over two-thirds were from 18 to 25 years of age. Slightly over 30 percent, or 18 students, were over 25 years of age. The twenty-six to thirty-one age group contained seven percent of the students and so did the fifty-plus age group. Although the more mature woman remains a potential source for recruitment to nursing, the

younger high school student still remains the greatest potential for recruitment to nursing.

Of the 56 students presently enrolled in the Clark College Associate Degree Program four, or seven and one-half percent, were male and 52 were females. Since nursing is traditionally a female occupation it is not surprising that there is such a small percent of male students.

Table 2 indicates the year in which the 56 students graduated from high school.

Table 2. Year of High School Graduation of 56 Students, Number and Percent, Enrolled in the Associate Degree Nursing Program at Clark College 1965

Year of High School Graduation	Number	Percent
1963 - 1964	14	25
1961 - 1962	10	17
1959 - 1960	7	13
1957 - 1958	8	14
1955 - 1956	2	4
1949 - 1952	5	9
1942 - 1946	6	11
1925 - 1934	4	7
Total	56	100

Twenty-five percent, or 14, of the 56 students graduated from high school in 1963 and 1964. Ten more, or 17 percent, graduated in 1961 and 1962. In 1959 and 1960 seven, or 13 percent, graduated from high school. Of the 17 who graduated from 1959 to 1962, six went to college immediately, another six enrolled in nursing programs, two married, one went into the army, and three worked in hospitals as nurse's aides.



Marital status of the students is indicated by Table 3 which shows that over half, or 53.5 percent, were single, 37.5 percent were married, and nine percent were widowed, divorced or separated.

Table 3. Marital Status, Number and Percent, of 56 Students Enrolled in the Clark College Associate Degree Nursing Program 1965

Marital Status	Number	Percent
Single	30	53.5
Married	21	37.5
Other	5	9.0
Total	56	100.0

Twenty-six students had 46 children of whom 33 were in the pre-school and grammar school age groups.

Table 4 gives the number and percent in each school group.

Table 4. Age Group of Children of 26 Students Enrolled in the Clark College Associate Degree Nursing Program 1965

Age Group	Number	Percent
Preschool	14	30.4
Grammar school	19	41.3
High school	9	19.5
Post-high school	4	8.8
Total	46	100.0

These 26 students who had the 46 children had family responsibilities which kept them in their home community and probably made it difficult for them to attend a program elsewhere. It is more likely that they would remain in the community after graduation and provide a potential source of recruitment for local hospitals and nursing homes.

Washington residents made up 71 percent of the students in the program, 27 percent came from Oregon, and only one came from Idaho as shown by Table 5.

Table 5. State of Residency of 56 Students in the Clark College Associate Degree Nursing Program 1965

State	Number	Percent
Washington	40	71
Oregon	15	27
Idaho	1	2
Total	56	100

There are no associate degree programs in Oregon. The 15 students, or 27 percent, who came from Oregon came from the Portland area. The student from Idaho who had previously been enrolled in a diploma school in Spokane, but had withdrawn because of illness, was staying with relatives in Vancouver so that she could attend Clark College. Altogether 98 percent of the students in the two classes came from Washington or Portland, Oregon.

Table 6 shows the classification of occupations<sup>1</sup> of fathers, mothers, and mates of the 56 students in the nursing program at Clark College.

Table 6. Classification of Occupations of Mothers, Fathers, and 24 Mates of 56 Students Enrolled in the Associate Degree Nursing Program at Clark College 1965

Classification of Occupations	Mothers		Fathers		Mates	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Professional/Technical	19	34	10	17.8	10	41
Craftsman/Foreman	1	2	17	30.3	1	4
Manager/Official	6	11	18	32.1	5	21
Service Workers	2	3	11	19.8	4	17
Homemaker	28	50			3	17
Total	56	100	56	100.0	24	100

As a whole the mates showed the highest percent (41 percent) in the "Professional/Technical" category. Sixty-four percent of the fathers were in the "Craftsman/Foreman" and "Manager/Official" category, or the "white-collar" categories. Twenty-eight, or 50 percent, of the mothers were "Homemakers". It is interesting to note that the next largest category for mothers is the "Professional/Technical". Thirty-four percent of the mothers fall here while only 17.8 percent of the fathers are in this group. However an even larger percentage of mates (41 percent) are in the "Professional/Technical" category.

1. The categories are based upon the classifications used by the United States Census Bureau as described in U.S. Occupational Handbook. (28)

Table 7 shows the educational background of mothers, fathers, and 24 mates of the 56 students in the Clark College nursing program.

Table 7. Educational Background of Mothers, Fathers, and 24 Mates of 56 Students Enrolled in the Clark College Associate Degree Nursing Program 1965

Educational Background	Mothers		Fathers		Mates	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Eighth grade or less	4	7	20	36	1	4
Tenth grade	4	7	2	3		
High school	23	41	23	41	10	41
One to three years of college	16	29	1	2	6	26
Four or more years of college	9	16	10	18	7	29
Total	56	100	56	100	24	100

Interesting comparisons can be made between the educational levels attained by the fathers, mothers and mates of the students. The number of mothers who completed high school equalled the number of fathers who had completed high school, and the identical percentage of mates had also attained this level of education. Twenty-five of the mothers had one or more years of college as compared with eleven fathers. Twenty-nine percent of the mates completed four or more years of college as compared with 16 percent of the mothers and 18 percent of the fathers.

Table 8. gives the sources of support for the students while they attended Clark.

Table 8. Source of Support of 56 Students  
Enrolled in the Clark College  
Associate Degree Nursing Program  
1965

Source of Support	Number	Percent
Parents	17	30.3
Self	16	28.8
Spouse	15	26.7
Other	8	14.2
Total	56	100.0

The greatest number of the 56 students, 30.3 percent, were dependent on parents for support while attending Clark College, the next largest group, 28.8 percent, were self-supporting, and mates providing support, 26.7 percent, came next. Scholarships, trust funds, and other means made up 14.2 percent. Since the largest percentage are recent high school graduates it is easy to see why parents constitute the largest source for financial support while the students are continuing their education.

Examination of the records of the 56 students revealed that their educational background ranged from 20 who had graduated from high school to two with college degrees. One student had a B.A. in education and one had a B.S. in biology. Sixteen students had less than one year of college, five had two years of college. Table 9 gives the distribution

of education of the 56 students beyond high school.

Table 9. Educational Background of 56 Students in the Associate Degree Nursing Program at Clark College 1965

Educational Background	Number	Percent
High school	20	35.5
Less than one year of college	16	28.8
One year of college	12	21.3
Two years of college	5	9.0
Three years of college	1	1.7
Four years of college	2	3.5
Total	56	100.0

Students having a high school education and less than one year of college made up 64 percent of the students. Thirty-two percent of them had one to three years of college and only 3.5 percent had completed college.

Eight of the 56 students had been enrolled in a collegiate program at one time, seven in a diploma program, and four had completed a practical nursing program. One student had been enrolled in a practical nursing program and had withdrawn because of illness in her family. Table 10 shows the number and percent of students previously enrolled in nursing programs.



Table 10. Number and Percent of 56 Students in the Associate Degree Program at Clark College Previously Enrolled in Nursing Programs

Type of Program	Number	Percent
Collegiate	8	42.0
Diploma or hospital	7	37.0
Practical nursing	4	21.0
Total	19	100.0

Nineteen students had been enrolled in nursing previously. The associate degree program may prove valuable in recruiting drop-outs from nursing since drop-outs constitute a substantial loss to the field of nursing. If the associate degree nursing program with students of a wide age range and diverse educational backgrounds can attract this group of people back into nursing it will help substantially to make up the deficit in nursing personnel.

Table 11 shows the number and percent of the sources of information the students said were the most valuable to them about a career in nursing.

Table 11. Number and Percent of Most Valuable Sources of Information About a Career in Nursing Given by 56 Students Enrolled in the Associate Degree Nursing Program at Clark College. 1965

Most Valuable Source of Information About Nursing	Number	Percent
1. Worked in hospital as aide or volunteer	14	25
2. Registered nurses	13	23
3. Future Nurse Club	5	9
4. College counselor	5	9
5. National League for Nursing literature	4	7
6. Mass media	3	5
7. Family physician	3	5
8. Licensed practical nurses	3	5
9. High school counselor	2	4
10. Student nurses	2	4
11. Teachers	1	2
12. Family	1	2
Total	56	100

Fourteen, or 25 percent, of the students said that they had received the most valuable information about a career in nursing as a result of having worked in a hospital as a nurses' aide or volunteer. The next most common source for information about nursing came from registered nurses. These two sources of information about nursing make up 49 percent, just less than half of the total sources. The next two,

Future Nurse Club, and college counselor were mentioned five times each, making 18 percent together. The remaining sources as shown in Table 11 were all mentioned less than 5 times.

Table 12 shows the distribution of students who made inquiries about the four types of nursing programs.

Table 12. Number and Percent of Inquiries About Four Types of Nursing Programs made by the 56 Students Enrolled in the Associate Degree Nursing Program at Clark College-1965

Types of Nursing Programs	Number of Inquiries	Percent
Practical nurse program	7	12.5
Associate degree program	56	100.00
Diploma or hospital school	35	62.5
Collegiate program	28	50.0

Since all of the students enrolled in the Associate Degree Program quite naturally had inquired about it prior to enrollment, it is quite possible that many did not receive adequate information about the program. One of the students was not quite sure she would be a registered nurse if she completed the course because a registered nurse had told her that associate degree graduates could not be licensed. It was not until she had applied to the school that she discovered she would be registered, once she had completed the program and passed state board examinations. The next largest number of inquiries was about the diploma program which received 62.5 percent of the inquiries. The collegiate program was next with 50 percent, and the practical program last with

only 12.5 percent. Forty-three, or 76.7 percent, of the students sought information about more than one program before making their choice. Of the 56 students 20, or 35.5 percent, sought information about three types of programs, 22 or 39 percent, sought information about two types of programs, and 13, or 24 percent, sought information about the Associate Degree Program at Clark College only before making their choice. They may not have received sufficient information or the information may not have been accurate concerning a particular program about which they inquired.

The 56 students checked more than one factor which influenced their choice of the Associate Degree Nursing Program at Clark College as shown by Table 13.

Table 13. Number and Percent of Factors Given as "Very Important," "Important," and "Not Important," by 56 Students Enrolled in the Clark College Associate Degree Nursing Program which Influenced Them to Choose that Program

Factors which Influenced the Choice of the Associate Degree Program at Clark College	Very Important		Important		Not Important	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1. Length of the program	41	73	10	18	5	9
2. Can live at home	36	64	4	7	16	29
3. Near family	34	62	4	7	18	31
4. Only associate degree program in the area	32	57	6	9	19	34
5. Cost	31	55	13	24	12	21
6. Academic credit for courses	27	48	10	18	19	34
7. Want a college degree	15	27	11	13	30	54
8. Age	12	21	5	9	39	70
9. Entrance requirements	12	21	15	27	29	52
10. Preparation of the faculty	12	21	9	16	35	63
11. Clinical resources	6	11	13	24	37	65
12. Liked to have classes with other college students	5	9	12	21	39	70
13. Friends go to Clark	2	3	2	3	52	94
14. Husband went to Clark	1	2				
15. Mother went to Clark			1	1		

Forty-one, or 73 percent, of the students listed "Length of the Program" as being "Very Important". The second most frequently mentioned factor was "Can live at home" listed by 36 students, or 64 percent, as "Very Important". Sixty-two percent, or 34 students, gave "Near family" as a "Very Important" factor which influenced their choice. The 26 students with family responsibilities consistently checked both "Can live at home" and "Near family" as factors which were "Very Important" in selecting Clark College's nursing program. "Only associate degree program in the area" received 66 percent of the combined "Very Important" and "Important" checks. Thirty-one, or 55 percent, of the students checked "Cost" as being a "Very Important" factor in selecting the program. Twenty-four percent, or 13 students, said "Cost" was "Important". Combining the two results 79 percent of the students' listed it as "Very Important" or "Important". "Academic credit" rated 66 percent of the votes. Thirty percent gave "Age" as a factor. All 13 of the single girls who checked "Can live at home" and "Near family" checked cost as "Very Important" or "Important". The sixty-six percent, or 37 students, who checked "Academic credit" as influencing their choice were not consistent because they did not plan on more education. Likewise, those who planned on more education did not identify "Academic credit" as a factor influencing their choice. In view of the students having a mean grade point average of 2.9 in high school it is not surprising that 27, or 48 percent, listed "Entrance requirements" as "Very Important" or "Important" (combined percentage) as a factor influencing their choice of the Associate Degree Program. Clark College accepts students with a



2.0 grade point average. It is interesting to note that 21 students, or 37 percent, said they were influenced by the preparation of the faculty. They were students who had had some college education and had been enrolled in nursing previously. The other factors tested did not seem to present any significant relationships to the other items.

When asked to tell the factors which influenced their choice of Clark College Associate Degree Nursing Program which had not been suggested on the interview guide the following factors were listed:

"I didn't want to teach nursing so I came to Clark College rather than to the University of Oregon School of Nursing."

"I attended Clark College because of the flexibility of the program."

"I didn't want to live in a nurses' residence."

"I came to Clark College because of the personal attention received by students which I learned from friends who were enrolled in the program."

"When I applied at Emanuel Hospital they did not accept male students."

"I would not have to stay at the school when I was on surgical call as I would have to do if I had gone to the University of Oregon School of Nursing."

The two students who had college degrees both stated they did not want to attend a baccalaureate program but wanted to become nurses in the shortest possible time. One planned on joining the Peace Corps and one was getting married shortly.

Forty-five of the 56 students who were enrolled in the Associate

Degree Program at Clark College said they felt they had received sufficient information about the program. Of the eleven who said they desired additional information one said she would have liked a more detailed account of the cost of the program; another said she came down from Seattle because she did not know about the associate degree program in Everett. Another student said, "the program was not up to what she expected", but she had not inquired about any other nursing programs, only the Associate Degree Program. Another said she wished she had had more knowledge of entrance requirements. She said she would have taken more science courses in high school had she realized how important a good science background was for nursing.

Two students felt that there wasn't enough clinical experience. Another student said she didn't really understand the program until she had recently read an article in the American Journal of Nursing, telling about the program. Still another from Oregon said there should be more publicity about the program in Oregon. One student said she heard prior to enrollment that it was not a good program and was pleased to discover that "it is a good program". One wished to have information about where to get financial assistance. One wished she had inquired more fully about faculty preparation.

When asked what they would do upon graduation, 85.7 percent or 48 of the students said they would be working in the hospital, one said she planned to work in a doctor's office, two planned to join the Peace Corps, two planned to go to school, one was going to have a baby. One planned to join "Young Life Staff" (a youth organization), and one

planned to be a public health nurse. The largest percentage planned to work in a hospital as staff nurses which is the major objective of the associate degree program.

After graduation from Clark College 76.7 percent, or 43 of the 56 students, said they planned to get more education. Table 14 indicates the educational plans of the 43 students who plan further education beyond graduation.

Table 14. Educational Plans of 43 of the 56 Students Enrolled in the Associate Degree Program at Clark College 1965

Educational Plans	Number	Percent
Bachelor of Science	27	62.7
Masters degree	3	6.9
Specialized courses	13	30.4
Total	43	100.0

In answer to the question of why they wanted more education 25 wanted to increase their knowledge of nursing, three said they wanted a degree to receive better pay, and two mentioned job security. Several of the reasons for more education and plans for the future overlapped. Among the plans mentioned were that 27 wanted to get a Bachelor of Science Degree, three wanted to get a Masters Degree to go into administration, five wanted to teach, and 13 wanted to specialize in obstetrics, pediatrics, psychiatric nursing, and public health nursing. The exact number and percent of their future plans is shown in Table 15.

Table 15. Plans of 43 Students Enrolled in the Associate Degree Nursing Program at Clark College who Plan Education Beyond the Associate Degree Level

Future Plans	Number	Percent
Teaching	5	11
Administration	3	7
Specialization		
Obstetrics	7	16
Pediatrics	1	2
Surgery	2	5
Intensive care	1	2
Public Health	2	5
Missionary	2	5
Marry	3	7
Peace Corps	2	5
Undecided	15	35
Total	43	100

Sixteen are undecided about future plans once they receive a Bachelor of Science degree. All of them plan to work in hospitals while continuing their education on a part-time basis. Four specifically stated that they planned to attend the University of Oregon School of Nursing to get their Bachelor of Science Degree. Two more said they planned to go to the University of Washington to get their degree.

The five students who plan to teach, and the three who plan to go into administration are not being realistic in selecting the Associate Degree Nursing Program at Clark College. Although each of them checked cost as a factor they may find the total length of time spent in achieving their goal may increase the cost appreciably. In the long run the

shorter program may not be the most economical. Three of the students who indicated they wanted to teach and had a grade point average of over 3.5 said that the director of the nursing department at Clark College had suggested they consider a baccalaureate program. They stated that attending a baccalaureate program would interfere with their family responsibilities. The two single students who planned to teach and had a superior grade point average, 3.9 and 4.0, said they would rather not be tied down for more than two years. They were thinking of marriage since both of them were engaged.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

The problem presented in this study was to determine what factors the 56 students gave as influencing their choice of the Associate Degree Nursing Program at Clark College. The information was obtained by interviews with each of the 56 students using an interview guide consisting of a check list and free response questions to insure asking pertinent questions, to standardize interview conditions, and to assist in tabulating the answers.

Permission was obtained from the president of Clark College and the director of the nursing department to do the study. Examination of the students records was used also as a source for personal information. Appointments were made with each of the 56 students at their convenience outside the classroom. The data processing department tabulated the 56 interview guides. The information obtained from the interviews, a review of the literature and related studies, and examination of the student records, provided the basis for the conclusions summarized as follows:

#### Findings

1. The majority, or 60 percent, of the 56 students enrolled in the Clark College Associate Degree Program are between the ages of 18 and twenty-three. This age group represents the characteristic age of student in diploma and collegiate programs. (5) The next largest group,



made up of 17 percent of the total in this study, consists of women who have had their children (now in school), and are ready to re-enter the labor force. They constitute a valuable source for recruitment to nursing which confirms the suggestion in Nurses For the West. (19) In view of the large percentage of recent high school graduates in the program, recruitment for the associate degree program should be aimed at the high schools which will continue to supply the largest numbers of potential students. Nevertheless, continued publicity about the associate degree program should be directed toward the more mature men and women in the community who are valuable resources to the field of nursing.

2. Proximity to Clark College was a factor which influenced 97 percent of the 56 students who came from Washington and neighboring Portland, Oregon. It might be wise to point out that the newness of the program, the large number of potential candidates in the community and the limited number of candidates who could be accepted in the program may explain the limited geographical area from which the candidates were drawn.

3. The socio-economic background of the students undoubtedly affected their choice of Clark College. Most of the fathers of the students (64.4 percent) were in the "Craftsman/Foreman" or "Manager/Official" occupational category. The student's choice of a professional career would seem to reflect an upward mobility. Almost twice the percentage of mothers were in the "Professional/Technical" category as fathers and probably were a strong factor in influencing their children to attain

an education leading to a specific profession. Of those students who were married, a strong influence must have been exerted by the 41 percent of mates who were in the top category of "Professional/Technical" occupations.

4. Since the largest percent of the 56 students were in the 18 to 23 age group, parents were the greatest source of support. The next largest group were self-supporting. The associate degree program is in a college setting which makes part-time employment possible. Because of the concentrated study needed to successfully complete the program employment may be limited, or the program may need to be extended.

5. The mean grade point average of the 56 students in high school was 2.9. Twenty-six students had a grade point average above 3.0, 20 between 2.5 and 2.9, and 10 were from 2.4 to 2.5. The majority, or 30 percent, were not intellectually superior. Perhaps the failures on the 1963 State Board Examinations reflect the large percentage of students with low grade point averages who were admitted to the program. These findings confirm the statement made by Margaret Bridgman (4) that we are not attracting superior students to nursing.

6. The majority of the students had completed a high school education recently which further suggests that recruitment be aimed at high school graduates.

7. Thirty-four percent of the 56 students had been enrolled in nursing previously. The associate degree program might well serve to attract drop-outs from other nursing programs and thus help to make up for the deficit in nursing personnel.

8. The two most valuable sources for information about a career in nursing mentioned by the 56 students were "working in a hospital as an aide or volunteer" and "registered nurses."

9. Slightly over 76 percent of the students sought information about more than one program before making their choice. Of the 56 students 35.5 percent made inquiries about three types of programs. However, the students may not have received sufficient information about the different types of nursing programs.

10. The two leading factors which influenced the 56 students to choose the Associate Degree Program at Clark College were length of the program, and being able to live at home or near the family. Seventy-three percent listed "Length of the program," 64 percent listed "Can live at home", and 62 percent listed "Near family" as factors which influenced their choice. The 26 students with family responsibilities consistently checked both "Can live at home" and "Near family" as "Very Important".

11. Seventy-nine percent of the students listed "Cost" as being "Very Important" and "Important". All 13 of the single girls who checked "Can live at home" or "Near family" also checked "Cost" as a factor influencing their choice. It was cost and not proximity to home which influenced their choice.

12. In view of the students having a grade point average of 2.9 it is not surprising that 48 percent listed "Entrance Requirements" as "Very Important" and "Important" in choosing the program.

13. A variety of other factors influenced choice. Sixty-six

percent cited "Only associate degree program in the area" as a factor influencing their choice. "Age" was mentioned by 30 percent of the students. "Preparation of the faculty" (37 percent) and "Clinical resources" (35 percent) were mentioned by the students who had either been in nursing previously or had one to three years of college. The 30 percent who mentioned "Liked to have classes with other college students" were among the younger students. The other factors mentioned by only a few, 9 percent, were that mother, husband, or friends attended Clark College.

14. A substantial number, 43 or 67.7 percent, of the students planned further education beyond the associate degree. The five who planned to teach and the three who planned to go into administration were probably not realistic in their choice, or did not understand the objectives of the associate degree program. Although each of them checked "Cost" as influencing their choice, the length of time necessary to attain their goal may not be economical in the long run. Perhaps the emphasis upon education throughout the country or realization of the need for the nurse to have advanced education prompted the students to mention desire for more education. If they actually plan on extended post-graduate training and study the choice of the associate degree program in the first place, rather than the collegiate program, would seem not to have been to their best interest.

#### Conclusions

From the findings of this study the following conclusions may be drawn:



1. Since the majority of the students had inquired about more than one type of program, the selection of the associate degree program was a deliberate choice. This conclusion is further substantiated by the responses in Table 13 showing that 73 percent of the students indicated that the length of the program influenced their choice of the school.

2. Although the literature contains many references to the associate degree programs' attractiveness to adult men and women beyond the age usually enrolled in schools of nursing, the current enrollment at Clark College consists largely of recent high school graduates.

3. In this study, it is evident that individuals who have previously been enrolled in schools of nursing are seeking a program which permits them to complete requirements for licensure. Presumably their interest in nursing has been sustained despite interruption of career planning.

4. Cost was a factor in choice of a program. With increasing costs of other nursing programs, particularly the diploma programs, this factor may become of increasing importance in the selection of a school.

5. Other factors such as location, admission requirements, laboratory experiences geared to education rather than service, college credit, and the like were reported to be important to the students. These factors are well-substantiated in the literature.

6. Some students did not seem to be well-informed concerning the objectives of nursing education. This finding has implications for recruitment and career counseling.

7. Family, friends, and other nurses were influential in assisting in choice of career and school. High school counseling appeared to be of negligible influence.

Recommendations for Further Study

Recommendations for further study are as follows:

1. Study ways whereby a recruitment program can be geared to reaching post high school adults.
2. Study "withdrawals" from schools of nursing for the purpose of ascertaining if sustained interest in nursing would lead to resuming a nursing program under circumstances that permit residing at home.
3. Study achievement of students in the Clark College Associate Degree Nursing Program to determine correlation, if any, between achievement on pre-entrance tests, achievement in the school, and achievement on state board examinations.
4. Conduct a follow-up study of graduates for two purposes:
  - a. To determine success in obtaining and performing satisfactorily in the employment situation.
  - b. To determine to what degree the associate degree graduates pursue further study in nursing.



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APPENDIX A

1016 East Evergreen Boulevard  
Vancouver, Washington  
February 22, 1965

Dr. Dwight Baird, President  
Clark College  
1925 Fort Vancouver Way  
Vancouver, Washington

Dear Dr. Baird:

In partial fulfillment of requirements for a Master of Science degree at the University of Oregon School of Nursing, I am undertaking a study of the reasons why students enter an associate degree program in nursing. I would very much like to pursue the study at Clark College. Mrs. Hamilton knows that I am interested in this topic and has expressed a willingness to cooperate. The procedure would include a brief interview with each of the students currently enrolled. The interview would take place at a mutually satisfactory time arranged with the consent of Mrs. Hamilton.

The findings of the study might well lead to identifying factors which would be useful in developing recruitment materials. Upon completion the study will be placed on file in the library at the University of Oregon School of Nursing.

At this time I am seeking administration clearance prerequisite to the collection of data.

Very truly yours,

Laura Emerson

Laura Emerson is a regularly enrolled graduate student at the University of Oregon School of Nursing. Any assistance you can offer her will be greatly appreciated.

---

Thesis Adviser

Number \_\_\_\_\_

Personal Information (Obtained from records)

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Marital status: Single \_\_\_ -Married \_\_\_ Widowed \_\_\_ Divorced \_\_\_ Separated \_\_\_

Number of children \_\_\_\_\_ Ages \_\_\_\_\_

State of residency \_\_\_\_\_

Father's occupation \_\_\_\_\_ Education \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's occupation \_\_\_\_\_ Education \_\_\_\_\_

Husband's occupation \_\_\_\_\_ Education \_\_\_\_\_

Source of support while attending Clark College \_\_\_\_\_

Education beyond high school \_\_\_\_\_

Date of high school graduation \_\_\_\_\_

Grade point average in high school \_\_\_\_\_

## INTERVIEW GUIDE

This study is being undertaken to try to determine the reasons you came to the Clark College Associate Degree Nursing Program.

1. From whom (where) did you acquire the most valuable information about a career in nursing?
 

a. Career Day in high school	a. _____
b. family physician	b. _____
c. friends	c. _____
d. Future Nurse Club	d. _____
e. high school counselor	e. _____
f. mass media (books, newspapers, radio, television)	f. _____
g. neighbors	g. _____
h. teachers	h. _____
i. other _____	
  
2. Did you seek information about more than one school of nursing before making your choice?
 

	yes _____
	no _____
  
3. If the answer is yes, about what types of nursing programs did you inquire?
 

a. practical nursing program	a. _____
b. associate degree program	b. _____
c. diploma or hospital program	c. _____
d. collegiate or degree school	d. _____

Factors which influenced your choice of the Associate Degree Nursing Program at Clark College.

	Very Important	Important	Not Important
4. Age			
5. Convenience			
a. can live at home			
b. near family			
c. only associate degree program in the area			
d. other _____			
6. Entrance requirements			
7. Length of the program			
8. Nursing program in college			
a. want a college degree			
b. academic credit for courses			
c. like to have classes with other college students			
9. Family attended college			
a. mother went to Clark College			
b. father went to Clark College			
c. relatives went to Clark College			
d. other _____			
10. Friends go to Clark College			
11. Cost			
12. Clinical resources			
13. Preparation of the faculty			
14. Other factors not listed above			
15. Now that you are enrolled in a school of nursing, is there additional information which you feel you should have had?			
			yes _____
			no _____
If yes, give examples. _____			
16. What do you plan to do upon graduation from Clark College?			
a. work in a hospital			a. _____
b. work in a doctor's office			b. _____
c. nursing home			c. _____
d. other (explain) _____			
17. Do you plan more education in nursing after graduation from Clark College?			
			yes _____
			no _____
If the answer is yes, why do you want more education? _____			
_____			
18. If you seek more education, what are your plans? _____			
_____			



APPROXIMATE COST OF ASSOCIATE DEGREE NURSING PROGRAM  
Resident of Washington

Pre-entrance:			
Wash. Precollege Guidance Battery	\$ 5.00		
Special Nursing Battery	5.00		
	<u>\$10.00</u>		
Fall quarter - 1			
Tuition	\$50.00		
Lab fees	5.00		
2 student uniforms	33.00		
2 pair white hose	2.50		
Cap	1.50		
Watch with second hand	12.95		
White shoes	10.00	- \$20.00	
Name pin	.75		
Bandage scissors	2.15		
School supplies	5.00		
Books	43.00		
P.E. equipment and/or fees	5.00		
P.E. suit and shoes	9.00		
	<u>\$180.55</u>		
Fall quarter - 2			
Tuition	\$50.00		
School supplies	5.00		
2 pair white hose	2.50		
Books	31.00		
	<u>\$88.50</u>		
Winter quarter - 2			
Tuition	\$50.00		
School supplies	5.00		
Books (1 required electives)	20.75		
	<u>\$75.75</u>		
Winter quarter - 1			
Tuition	\$50.00		
Lab fees	5.00		
School supplies	5.00		
Books	22.25		
P.E. equipment and/or fees	5.00		
	<u>\$87.25</u>		
Spring quarter - 1			
Tuition	\$50.00		
School supplies	5.00		
Books	13.25		
P.E. equipment and/or fees	5.00		
	<u>\$73.25</u>		
Summer quarter - 1			
Tuition	\$50.00		
School supplies	5.00		
Books	11.95		
	<u>\$66.95</u>		
Spring quarter - 2			
Tuition	\$50.00		
School supplies	5.00		
Books (estimate for electives)	12.00		
	<u>\$67.00</u>		
Total Cost (excluding transportation, room and board, and State Board Examination).			
			<u>\$639.25</u>

APPENDIS C



## APPENDIX D

## ASSOCIATE DEGREE NURSING PROGRAM

CLARK COLLEGE - VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON

## FRESHMAN CURRICULUM

FALL		WINTER	
	cr. hrs.		cr. hrs.
English Composition	3	English Composition	3
Chemistry	3	Chemistry	3
Introductory Psychology	5	Anatomy and Physiology	5
Fundamentals of Nursing	4	Maternal and Child Health	5
Physical Education	1	Physical Education	1
	<u>16</u>		<u>17</u>
SPRING		SUMMER	
	cr. hrs.		cr. hrs.
Child Development	3	Psychiatric Nursing	9
Chemistry	3	Introductory Sociology	5
Anatomy and Physiology	5	English Composition	3
Maternal and Child Health	5		<u>17</u>
Physical Education	1		
	<u>17</u>		

## SOPHOMORE CURRICULUM

FALL		WINTER	
	cr. hrs.		cr. hrs.
Microbiology	5	Medical-Surgical Nursing	11
Nutrition	4	Electives in Humanities	5
Medical-Surgical Nursing	9		<u>16</u>
	<u>18</u>		
SPRING			
	cr. hrs.		
Medical-Surgical Nursing	11		
Electives in Humanities	5		
	<u>16</u>		

APPENDIX E

TABULATION OF FINDINGS

Personal Information (Obtained from personal records)

1-2 Number of Interview Guide-1-56

3-4 Age	18	19	20	21	22	23	25	26	27	31	32	33	34	36	38	40	41	50	51	56
Number	3	7	2	2	7	4	3	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	1

5 Sex - Male	4	Female	52	6 Marital status	Single	30	Married	21	Divorced	2	Widowed	3
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7 Number of children - 46	Preschool	14	Grammar	19	High school	9	Post high school	4
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8 State of residency -	Washington	40	Oregon	15	Idaho	1
------------------------	------------	----	--------	----	-------	---

10-18 Occupations and educational level of fathers, mothers and mates of the 56 students

Occupations	Fathers	Mothers	Mates	Education	Fathers	Mothers	Mates
Professional/Technical	10	19	10	Less than 8th grade	20	4	1
Craftsman/Foreman	17	1	1	Tenth grade	2	4	
Manager/Official	18	6	5	High school	23	23	10
Service worker	11	2	4	Two years college	2		
Homemaker		28	4	Three years college		16	6
				Four or more years	10	9	7

20-21 Education beyond high school

Number of years of college	Fathers	Mothers	Mates	Previous nursing program
Less than one year	16			Practical nursing
One year	12			Diploma school
Three years	5			Collegiate
Four years	2			

APPENDIX E (CONTINUED)

22-23	Date of high school graduation	Number	24	Grade point average in high school	Number
	Year			Range	
	1963-1964	14		0 - 2.4	10
	1961-1962	10		2.5-2.9	20
	1959-1960	7		3.0-3.4	17
	1957-1958	8		3.5-3.9	8
	1955-1956	2		4.0	1
	1949-1952	5			
	1942-1946	6			
	1925-1934	4			

Interview Guide

- 26 1. Source of most valuable information about nursing
- |  |    |
|--|----|
| a. Worked in hospital as aide or volunteer | 14 |
| b. Registered nurses                       | 13 |
| c. Future Nurse Club                       | 5  |
| d. College counselor                       | 5  |
| e. National League for Nursing literature  | 4  |
| f. Mass media                              | 3  |
| g. Family physician                        | 3  |
| h. Licensed practical nurses               | 3  |
| i. High school counselor                   | 2  |
| j. Student nurses                          | 2  |
| k. Teachers                                | 1  |
| l. Family                                  | 1  |
- 27 2. Number who sought information about more than one school before making choice.
- Yes - 43  
No - 13
- 28 3. Types of nursing programs which the students inquired.
- |                                     |    |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| a. practical nursing program        | 7  |
| b. associate degree nursing program | 56 |
| c. diploma or hospital program      | 35 |
| d. collegiate or degree school      | 28 |

APPENDIX E (CONTINUED)

29 4. Factors which influenced 56 students to choose the Associate Degree Nursing Program at Clark College

	Very Important	Important	Not Important
1. Length of the program	41	10	5
2. Can live at home	36	4	16
3. Near family	34	4	18
4. Only associate degree program in area	32	6	19
5. Cost	31	13	12
6. Academic credit for courses	27	10	19
7. Want a college degree	15	11	30
8. Age	12	5	39
9. Entrance requirements	12	15	29
10. Preparation of the faculty	12	9	35
11. Clinical resources	6	13	37
12. Liked to have classes with other college students	5	12	39
13. Friends go to Clark	2	2	52
14. Husband went to Clark	1		
15. Mother went to Clark		1	

48 16. Additional information about program feel should know.

Yes - 11  
No - 45

19. Plans of those who seek education beyond graduation

Plans of those who seek education beyond graduation	Count
a. teach	5
b. administration	3
c. specialization	7
obstetrics	1
pediatrics	2
surgery	1
intensive care	2
public health	2
d. missionary	3
e. marry	2
f. Peace Corps	3
g. undecided	16

49 17. Plans upon graduation.

a. work in hospital	48
b. work in a doctor's office	1
c. nursing home	0
d. other	7

50 18. Education planned beyond graduation.

Yes - 43  
no - 13

Typed by Mary Mautz