

A FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF NINETY-ONE
GRADUATES OF AN ASSOCIATE
DEGREE PROGRAM IN NURSING
1959-1963

by
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A THESIS

Presented to the
University of Oregon School of Nursing
and the Graduate Division of the
University of Oregon Medical School
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Science

June 9, 1966

This study was Developed With the Financial Assistance of a Nurse Traineeship from the United States Public Health Service, Grant Number NT-35-C7.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer wishes to acknowledge the invaluable assistance and guidance in preparation of this study by Miss Lucile Gregerson, Associate Professor of Nursing at the University of Oregon School of Nursing. The writer wishes to express appreciation to the Ricks College Nursing Faculty for their encouragement; and to the nursing graduates for their cooperation.

1.1.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I INTRODUCTION	1
Background of the Problem	1
Statement of the Problem	2
Limitations	3
Assumptions	4
Importance of Study	4
Definition of Terms	5
Source of Data	5
Methodology	5
Overview of Subsequent Chapters	6
II REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND RELATED STUDIES	8
Historical Background	8
Studies Concerning New Graduates	14
Follow-up Study of LPN's	17
Studies Involving Graduates of Baccalaureate Degree Programs in Nursing	18
Matching Student to Programs	19
Studies of the Graduates of the Associate Degree Program	21
Summary	29
III REPORT OF THE STUDY	31
Setting for the Study	31
Design of the Study	32
Presentation and Interpretation of Data	34
Opinions of Graduates Concerning Their Preparation	34
Outstanding Features and Weaknesses of Program	41
Positions Held by Graduates	44
Continuing Education	45
IV SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	47
Summary	47
Findings	48
Conclusions	50
Recommendations for Further Study	51
BIBLIOGRAPHY	53

CHAPTER	PAGE
APPENDIX	
A. Cover Letter	58
B. Follow-up Letter	59
C. Questionnaire	60
D. Philosophy and Objectives of Ricks College Nursing Department	63

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
1. Number and Percentage of Responses of 91 Graduates of An Associate Degree Program to The Question: Now That You Have The Practical Experience of Working As A Graduate Nurse, How Do You Feel About Your Preparation for The Job(s) You Have Had in Nursing?	36
2. Number and Percentage of Responses of 91 Graduates of An Associate Degree Program to The Question: Do You Feel That Any Parts of Your Preparation Were Particularly Good for The Kind of Nursing Required of You in This Job?	38
3. Number and Percentage of Responses of 91 Graduates of An Associate Degree Program to The Question: Do You Feel That Any Parts of Your Preparation Were Not Adequate for The Kind of Nursing Required of You in This Job?	40
4. Number and Percentage of Responses of 91 Graduates of An Associate Degree Program to The Question: Do You Have Any Suggestions As to How Your Entire Educational Program Might Have Been Improved?	41
5. Number of Responses of 91 Graduates of An Associate Degree Program Concerning Outstanding and Weak Aspects of Their Program	43
6. Number and Percentage of Responses of 91 Graduates of An Associate Degree Program Concerning The Type of Initial Positions They Have Taken	45
7. Number and Percentage of Responses of 91 Graduates of An Associate Degree Program to A Question Concerning Whether They Are Continuing Their Education	46

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

A new type of nursing program was established by the experimental project of Dr. Mildred Montag called the Cooperative Research Project in Junior and Community College Education for Nursing. This project was carried out at Teachers College, Columbia University. It included the development of eight pilot schools of nursing centered in the Junior College situation. Graduates of these schools received an associate degree in nursing and were eligible to take the State Board Test Pool Examination and upon successful achievement, became Registered Nurses. These pilot schools were the first of a new kind of nursing education which is known as the associate degree program in nursing. (25)

Hugo Hullerman describes this new type of nursing education as a program that combines some of the advantages of both the hospital and university nursing schools. It provides a college education; it is a two year course; it is low in cost to the student; it has good recruitment potentials with strong local community focus. There is no direct cost to the hospital or the

patient; it offers a good balance between classroom and bedside learning.(17)

In September, 1957, an associate degree nursing program opened in a junior college in Rexburg, Idaho. The program is known as the Ricks College Nursing Program and is patterned after those established by the Cooperative Research Project in Junior and Community College Education. Since its beginning, five classes have been graduated and joined the ranks of Registered Nurses.

Ruth Freeman in writing about the associate degree nursing programs states there is much need for study to be done concerning the success of the graduates of this new type of nursing program.(12)

The Ricks College Department of Nursing was concerned with the need for follow-up study of their graduates and beginning in 1960 questionnaires were sent to each graduate a year after they had graduated from the nursing program.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this project is to follow-up the graduates of an Associate Degree Program in Nursing at Ricks College for the years, 1959 to 1963. The following are the questions for which the study seeks to find specific answers:

1. What are the expressed opinions of the graduates concerning the adequacy of their preparation for their jobs?
2. What are the expressed opinions of the graduates concerning how their educational program might have been improved?
3. What are the expressed opinions of the graduates concerning the outstanding features of their program?
4. What are the expressed opinions of the graduates concerning the weaknesses of their program?
5. What are the initial positions of the graduates?
6. Are the initial positions of the graduates at the level for which the graduate was prepared?
7. Are these graduates seeking further nursing education?

Limitations

This study has been limited to:

1. Information collected by a mailed questionnaire modified from the "Interview Guide-General Duty Nurse" developed and used by Dr. Mildred Montag in her follow-up studies of the graduates of the pilot study schools 1952 to 1957.
2. The response of 91 graduates (out of 128) of the first five classes from Ricks College Nursing Program 1959 to 1963.
3. The stated responses with no attempt to validate or determine the reasons for the responses.

Assumptions

For purposes of this study, it was assumed that:

1. The data collecting tool developed by Dr. Mildred Montag had been thoroughly validated and was therefore useful for further follow-up studies.
2. A follow-up study would reveal information useful to the nursing program and ultimately to subsequent classes of student nurses.
3. At least one year of employment would be ample to permit respondents to assess the merits and/or demerits of their nursing preparation.
4. The information supplied by the respondents would be factual within the scope of the questionnaire and that the information would be a reflection of the respondent's opinions or feelings.

Importance of Study

The Ricks College Associate Degree Program is a new program established on the new pattern of nursing education. This study is important to determine how effective the Ricks College Nursing Program has been. It is also important in identifying any curriculum changes needed to produce more effective graduates. It will provide information basic to effective guidance to students.

Definition of Terms

For purposes of this study, the following definitions have been accepted.

Associate Degree Program: A collegiate controlled nursing program that grants an associate degree to its graduates.

First Level Nursing: Commonly accepted by hospital personnel to describe the position of a staff or general duty nurse; duties vary from service to service and hospital to hospital.(25)

Sources of Data

The primary data were obtained from the questionnaires completed by the graduates of the first five graduating classes, 1959-1963, from Ricks College. The literature as exemplified by nursing periodicals, pertinent books, related pamphlets and studies provided the secondary source of data.

Methodology

This study was conducted as a normative-comparative survey. A description of the steps used in the design of the study are as follows:

1. A review of the related literature was done to determine the purpose of a follow-up study and its use in nursing education specifically with the associate degree program. The literature

was also reviewed to develop a frame of reference regarding the associate degree program in nursing.

2. Purposes of the study were formulated.
3. Permission was obtained from the Head of the Department of Nursing at Ricks College to do the study and to use information previously received from questionnaires submitted to graduates of the school.
4. The questionnaire was reviewed and refined to meet the purposes of this study.
5. A mailing list was obtained for the graduates in classes from 1959-1962 who had not previously answered the questionnaire and for the graduates of 1963.
6. A cover letter was prepared; it was co-signed by the Thesis Advisor.
7. Questionnaire and cover letter were mailed to the graduates listed in step 5.
8. Data obtained from the questionnaire were tabulated and interpreted.
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 describes the setting

for the study, the design of the study; it presents and interprets the data. Chapter IV contains a summary of this study, conclusions and recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND RELATED STUDIES

Historical Background

Demands for educational reform in nursing can be traced back to the first schools of nursing. Josephine Goldmark made a study in 1923 that pointed out the difficulties of operating schools under hospital management and also suggested the possibility of reducing the training period.(3)

Bernice E. Anderson in Nursing Education in Community Junior Colleges pointed out that in the hospital managed schools, nurses gained their education through work experience with the hospital needs coming first. Nursing educators began to recognize that not all nursing services needed by the hospital patients were essential for student learning. Effort was made to be more selective of the students' learning experience. By 1946, changes in nursing personnel were also taking place and more graduate nurses were employed in staff nurse positions under supervision.(2)

Esther Lucile Brown in Nursing for the Future in 1948, called attention to the need for a re-examination of hospital-controlled nursing schools and recommended the

development of more nursing programs in institutions of higher education.(5)

Louise McManus in the foreword for J.F. Buechel's study Principles of Administration in Junior and Community College Education for Nursing noted additional trends that have been brought to bear upon nursing education. There was a beginning acceptance of the point of view that it is the responsibility of the school of nursing, like other professional schools, to provide the basic education and training which will qualify the nurse to begin the practice of nursing upon graduation rather than to retain her as a student in the school until a high degree of skill and expertness had been developed through repetitive practice. There was a growing recognition that technical education is the kind needed by those who work regularly in situations where they have access to continued supervision, and when policies and procedures are well-established. Professional education is recognized as the type needed by those who must work independently. There had been a phenomenal development of junior and community colleges attended by an ever increasing percentage of college-age youth and adults.(6)

Margaret Bridgman in Collegiate Education for Nursing recognized the potential role of the Junior Colleges in the preparation of nurses. These institutions are experienced

in terminal-occupational education in other fields and have an opportunity for developing a similar program in nursing.

(4)

In 1949 a proposal was made by the National League for Nursing Education to the American Association of Junior Colleges that the two organizations form a committee to explore ways in which junior colleges could participate more effectively in nursing education. The joint committee met and agreed that the junior college was an appropriate place for the preparation of nurses to take place. Through this joint committee, nursing educators were helped to understand the philosophy and characteristics of educational programs leading to associate degrees and to envision the potentialities of associate degree programs in nursing.(3)

In 1951 Mildred L. Montag proposed the nursing curriculum designed specifically for junior colleges as described in The Education of Nursing Technicians. She proposed that nursing technicians could be educated in two academic years.(30)

The Division of Nursing Education of Teachers College, Columbia University in 1952 received a grant of \$110,000 from Mrs. Nelson Rockefeller, to support the Cooperative Research Project in Junior and Community College Education for Nursing.(6,18,25,26,27,28,29,35) The purpose of the research was to develop and test a new concept in preparing

young men and women to carry out the functions that are usually associated with registered nurses. Mildred Montag directed the research project. Four assumptions (25,30,35) were accepted for this study. First, nursing functions can and should be differentiated into three categories: professional, semi-professional or technical, and assisting. The bulk of nursing functions lie in the intermediate category, the semi-professional or technical. Second, education for nursing belongs in educational institutions. Third, the junior-community college, the post-high school educational institution specifically suited to semi-professional or technical education, is the logical institution for this program. Fourth, when preparation for nursing is education rather than service-centered, less time would be required to reach the objectives.

The Cooperative Research Project consisted of eight pilot schools organized under like philosophy and having certain common characteristics.(32) It lasted for a period of five years, 1952 to 1957. Interest from both nursing and junior college educators was shown in this project and after joint effort by the American Association of Junior Colleges and the National League for Nursing, (6,43) a statement of Guiding Principles for Junior Colleges Participating in Nursing Education, (34) was developed. Help was also given the pilot schools by an advisory committee which

met annually with all those involved in the project. At the close of the project Mildred Montag made this statement:

Among the things that we have learned is that it is possible for a college to operate a program of this type, the program is attractive to students, and it does produce a nurse who will become competent in a very short time. I think any educator in the country will tell you that educational programs do not prepare experts; they prepare people to become experts. We believe that the report of our project will show that the graduates of junior college programs participating in the project have the ability to become expert bedside nurses.(28)

The report of this project showed the following conclusions based on the findings of the study:

1. Nurses able to carry on the functions commonly associated with the Registered Nurse can be prepared in the new type nursing program conducted by the junior community college.
2. When nursing service understands and accepts the concept of a graduate as a beginning practitioner and not a finished product, the graduate of the junior community college nursing program is oriented more realistically and absorbed more quickly into the nursing service.(25)

One Road Toward Adequate Nursing Service, a pamphlet published by the Western Council On Higher Education for Nursing, in 1964, described the associate degree nursing program in the junior college as a new educational resource for nursing. "The rationale behind this plan to prepare the bedside nurse in less than the traditional three years was to base a program on sound educational objectives rather

than on a combination of service and educational responsibilities."(47)

This new type of nursing education should help to alleviate the shortage of registered nurses as described by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education in Nurses For The West.(46) This report indicated that the west is not graduating enough students even to replace drop-outs in the present nurse force; the west has not begun to supply the nurses needed to keep pace with the rapid increase in population.

The purpose of the associate degree programs (1,20,22, 25) is to produce a nurse whose place is at the patient's bedside giving complete, direct patient care. She is prepared to function as a member of the team (45) in contrast to the baccalaureate graduate who is prepared in beginning leadership skills. Joan Rubin, in reference to the "RN in Two Years" indicates that due to the shortage of registered nurses, practical nurses are taking over many of the duties of the bedside nurse, then the "2 yr. RN" is pushed into supervisory positions for which she is not prepared.(42)

Some of the associate degree graduates are continuing their education and receiving a baccalaureate degree in nursing. Martha Rogers reported her experience with these students at the New York University where much study was

conducted as to what curriculum should be planned for these students.(40)

Junior and community colleges have participated for some time in nursing education but only since the beginning of the associate degree programs have they had full responsibility for administering as well as financing this program. (31) Faculties have a great deal of freedom in curriculum planning. Limitations are set by the availability of resources, requirements of state licensing authority, criteria of accrediting agencies, and the controlling institution's requirements. Length of programs usually fall either within two academic years or two calendar years.(20,33)

Studies Concerning New Graduates

Carol E. Randall reported a study concerning what is expected of a new graduate in the nursing situation. The study was carried out by members of the Directors of Nursing Service Committee of the Cleveland Council and League for Nursing from October 1959 to April 1960. A list of basic skills expected of the new graduates was compiled. This list was reviewed by six new graduates who agreed they felt adequately prepared to perform the skills. The list was then reviewed jointly by the Directors of Nursing Service Committee and the directors of the schools of nursing in

the Cleveland area. They agreed that the list was reasonable and that these skills were being taught in the schools. It was concluded that there was no gap between what the student learned in school and what she was expected to do as a new graduate but there was a transition period.(38) This study was concerned with new graduates who entered the work world and their transition period.

Follow-up studies have been done concerning the transition period between study and work experience. The first year after graduation is considered to be one of the most critical. The work world is an entirely new world from the student world. Expectations are frequently not clarified and the new graduate may be caught in the demands of the situation. There is a need for planned adjustment on the part of the nurse herself, the school, and the employing agent. The study by Mary A. Miller in 1962 reported that 59% of the new graduates who participated in the study answered the question "Who helped you the most in adjusting to the work situation?", by naming the head-nurse. To the question of how much time it had taken for them to feel comfortable and secure: sixty-two percent replied two months, fifteen percent said three months, fourteen percent said six months and six percent said one year. Response to a check list on functions they felt best prepared to do: seventy-seven percent checked bedside care. Eighty-six

percent checked "identifying the teaching and counseling needs of patients" as the function they felt least prepared to do.(24)

A study to determine the adequacy of the preparation of recent graduates performing in first level positions was done by Janice Rondestvedt. In this study, The Opinions of Sixty-Two Professional Nurses Concerning the Adequacy of the Preparation Recent Graduates Have Had for Performing in First Level Nursing Position, the investigator interviewed sixty-two directors of nursing, supervisors, head-nurses, and staff nurses in several hospitals throughout Oregon as to their opinions concerning the adequacy of the preparation recent graduates had for performing in first level nursing positions. She used an interview guide to obtain the data for the study. A letter explaining the purpose of the study and how long each interview would take was sent to each hospital. The directors of nursing notified the personnel concerning their participation. The researcher found all participants very cooperative. She ask opinions specific to the three types of programs, baccalaureate, diploma and associate degree. Her study indicated that seventy percent of the respondents did not think nurses could be prepared adequately for the first level nursing in the associate degree program. A very pertinent point that she brings out is that there were no associate degree graduates

employed in any of the hospitals included in her study and only five of the participants had known or worked with graduates of the associate degree program. Almost eighty percent of the respondents indicated that the diploma program could effectively prepare nurses and thirty-six point nine percent thought nurses could be adequately prepared in a baccalaureate program. The majority of those interviewed were diploma school graduates.(41)

Follow-up Study of LPN's

A questionnaire was used by Feinberg in her study, A Follow-up Study of The Graduates of The Portland School of Practical Nursing. She sought answers to questions such as: 1. How many of the graduates are active in practical nursing? 2. In what areas of nursing do these graduates now work? 3. Do they regard their preparation as adequate? 4. Would they recommend practical nursing to others? Her conclusions indicated that seventy percent were currently employed in practical nursing. Ninety-six percent had been employed at various times. Graduates tended to remain in hospitals. Fifty-four percent were asked to perform activities for which they felt unprepared. In general, they were satisfied with their program; ninety-two percent felt their course had prepared them to be good practical nurses. They were generally satisfied with their work and with the

vocation of practical nursing. Ninety percent stated they would recommend practical nursing to others.(11)

Studies Involving Graduates of Baccalaureate
Degree Programs in Nursing

A Follow-up Study of Graduates of the Baccalaureate Degree Program in Nursing at Medical College of Virginia was reported by Jean Hayter in 1963. She used a questionnaire which was sent to the graduates and the employers of the graduates. A total of 131 (94%) usable questionnaires were returned. The findings indicated that the graduates had held many different positions, in various types of health agencies. One hundred and six (83%) of the graduates rated their preparation "above other graduates" and none rated it "below other graduates." Sixty-five (50%) of the employers rated the graduates' preparation as "above other graduates" and only one rated the graduates' preparation as "below other graduates." Several graduates suggested that more general education courses be offered. The employers offered very few suggestions for improvement of the educational program.(14)

In a follow-up study reported by Janet L. Erickson in the Nursing Outlook, in June 1962, on how nurses feel about their first work experience, twelve new baccalaureate graduates were interviewed. Eight were from a California school

of nursing and four were from other collegiate schools. The interview sought answers to the following questions: How valuable had the course been? How well had it helped them to function? What had been good about it? What should have been different? The interviews revealed that the new graduates felt the program was adequate. They all felt the greatest adjustment they had to make was to the new responsibilities thrust upon them, the greater patient load they were expected to carry, and the frustrations they felt in not being able to give the kind of care they had given as students because of lack of time. They felt they had been helped by confidence in their education and their own knowledge. Occasionally they had been hindered by too rapid assumption of charge nurse duties and by personnel who did not seem to understand them or who ridiculed their efforts. The participants were eager to give their schools credit for having prepared them well for their new jobs.(9)

Matching Students to Programs

A recent study reported by Laura Dustan in the Nursing Outlook of May 1964, included four schools of nursing in a single California city and sought an answer to the question: What is the "fit" between present day students and the programs they have chosen? This study defined the associate degree and diploma programs as schools designed as

vocational-terminal curriculum with the objective of preparing their graduates for practice as staff nurses in hospitals, homes, doctors' offices, and clinics. Two of the sub-questions were: "Do students in diploma and associate degree programs consider their education terminal or do they anticipate undertaking baccalaureate education after completing their present programs? Do the career expectations of the students in the three types of programs reflect the objectives of the schools in which they are enrolled?" Participants consisted of 379 students from associate degree, diploma and baccalaureate programs. The findings showed that the immediate post graduation plans of the associate degree students were commensurate with the objectives of their program. Most of them anticipated employment as staff nurses in a variety of institutional settings. Their long range plans included positions for which a baccalaureate degree is minimum requirement: positions in public health nursing, various levels of nursing service administration and in teaching in schools of nursing. The associate degree program had the highest percent of students who anticipated that they would like to become teachers. Over half of the associate degree students indicated they planned to seek baccalaureate preparation in the near future and one fourth were planning to undertake graduate study.(8)

Studies of the Graduates of the Associate Degree Program

Wilma Hiatt, in reference to the associate degree nursing programs in California, described the qualities frequently exhibited by the graduates as:

1. Graduates have a strong sense of their potential nursing role, and seek employment to give patient care.
2. They have skills in self-evaluation and problem-solving abilities.
3. They are question-askers and learners.
4. They are persons who have had an education emphasizing the patient and his need for emotional support.
5. They are enthusiastic and they are individuals.

Staff nurse experience was recommended first for all new graduates. The education within its goals was considered to be complete and most persons stopped at this point, but those who wished and had the ability, might continue their education.(15)

The State Board of Nursing Education and Nurse Registration of California conducted a study, California Associate in Arts Nursing Project, Part II, which included every employed associate degree graduate in California and a representative sampling of new diploma and baccalaureate degree graduates. A summary of the evaluation report on the employed graduates was included. The following was concluded about the associate degree programs:

1. Persons are being recruited into nursing associate degree programs who would probably not have been financially or socially able to attend other types of nursing schools.
2. Programs are being established in new geographical areas, using new clinical facilities and serving new population groups.
3. Taxpayers are supporting nursing education as they do other majors.
4. The curriculum has quality and standards equal to other college courses and other programs in nursing.
5. The students and faculty meet college standards.
6. Graduates do well in the official licensing examination.
7. As many or more associate degree graduates go to work as registered nurses as do graduates of other nursing programs.
8. The employers of associate degree graduates rated them as able to meet standards of competency set for other beginning R.N. personnel.
9. Employers found that regular orientation and inservice programs appropriate to the needs of associate degree graduates were also appropriate to all R.N. personnel new to the agency.
10. Graduates were enthusiastic, able to evaluate their own abilities, and willing to take their share of evenings, nights, and weekends.(44)

In May 1964, Edith Lewis reported in the American Journal of Nursing on the associate degree program. She based her comments on conferences with directors and faculty

members in associate degree programs; nursing service directors who had observed the performance of graduates, and some graduates themselves. She described the graduate as enthusiastic, eager to learn and particularly strong in individual patient care and interpersonal relationships. Most of the associate degree program graduates were holding the positions and performing the functions for which their education prepared them, namely staff nursing. According to a 1961 survey, two-thirds were employed as staff nurses; some had been called upon to function as team leaders or head nurses.(21)

RN magazine undertook a study to ascertain the answer to: "When associate degree nurses start working as R.N.s do they find that their preparation has been adequate or inadequate?" Questionnaires were sent to the associate degree nurses themselves. Ninety-three percent of the associate degree nurses who answered the questionnaire worked in or near the communities where the colleges they attended were located. Nearly two-thirds of the graduates were still working at the hospitals where they started after graduation. Comments by the graduates were: "Our training for bedside nursing was generally good. I'd like to see more practical work on the floor though, especially the first year. Adequate supervision is a must. We did not get enough supervision when we started to work. Being a

good bedside nurse isn't enough as we are pushed into a charge position before we can handle it." Most respondents said more clinical practice was needed. Some areas listed by the graduates as being too limited were: "relations with doctors, emergency room procedures, ward management and all other leadership situations."(37)

Claudia D. Gips reported on An Evaluation of Graduates of the Associate Degree Program, at Rutgers University College. The study covered a period of five months and included 18 graduates from classes of 1954, 1955, and 1956. The graduates were graded on rating sheets by the head nurses and supervisors. All statements about graduates were placed on 3x5 cards. A total of 2842 statements were collected. Judges were chosen from various institutions. Every card was read by six judges who sorted the cards into three different stacks, excellent, adequate, and inadequate. Statements made about the graduates and the nursing care they gave were more frequently considered to be excellent or adequate than inadequate. The most consistent finding was satisfactory relationship with patients. The greatest single criticism was that the associate degree graduates seemed aloof at times and did not want to help co-workers. Although nearly 3000 statements were collected, it should be noted that only 18 associate degree graduates were rated.(13)

Prior to the development of 2-year programs in the U.S. a demonstration school was started in Canada. A follow-up study was made to determine if the graduates of this school were adequate bedside nurses. Reports from three different hospitals indicated that those graduates compared well with others. The school was closed after four classes graduated because of lack of financial support.(10)

In Community College Education for Nurses, an extensive follow-up study is reported by Mildred Montag on the graduates of the eight pilot schools established by the Cooperative Research Project to test a new type of nursing program. This program is presently known as the associate degree program. A grant of \$110,000 supported this project, which was assisted throughout its research by an advisory committee. In selecting the pilot schools, questionnaires were sent to forty-two colleges and returns were received from twenty-four. These questionnaires were reviewed and certain institutions were selected for visits by the project staff who selected seven of the colleges visited. When it was decided one hospital school should be included it was selected by the same method used in selecting the participating colleges. Each cooperating institution was independent and entered the project voluntarily. A statement of agreement was drafted cooperatively which served as the basis of

their working relationships. Workshops were held throughout the project to give assistance to the cooperating institutions. Nursing directors of the pilot schools kept in contact with their own graduates and reported work information including positions held and types of hospitals in which they were employed. The remainder of the findings were based on interviews with the graduates of the pilot and other programs, with head nurses, and with directors of nursing service. The findings indicated that the primary role assumed by the pilot program graduate involved giving patient care or giving medications or treatment under the supervision of a head nurse or team leader. The following hypothesis was retained: "Given some work experience, the graduates of the pilot programs perform the functions of the staff nurse as well as graduates of other types of programs." In general, the pilot-program graduates were satisfied with their preparation for nursing; although some indicated concern over limited practical experience, primarily the experience of assuming supervisory responsibility. The most frequent comment about the good part of their preparation was in reference to the quality of the patient care they were taught. The majority of the graduates felt that their preparation for nursing had particular weaknesses. Most of these comments dealt with practical experience. Other weaknesses which were mentioned only once were

pharmacology, charts and slips, intravenous feeding, pediatrics, treatments, and too much supervision. The outstanding features mentioned by the graduates fit into categories outside of specialized nursing preparation, such as advantages of attending college, being able to complete program in two years, and living arrangements, which involved being able to live at home while becoming a nurse. More nursing service directors interviewed were favorable toward the pilot program than were unfavorable.(25)

Two recent graduates from the associate degree program, reported on a poll in which students of the program were asked their evaluation of the course. Comments included in this report were: "The crux of the program is being college, as well as nursing students. We valued the emphasis of interpersonal relationships throughout all experiences. Child Growth and Development helped us in self understanding. Basic communication classes were an aid in speaking to patients. Benefits from Humanities and Social Sciences were a stimulation in interest and a desire to pursue subjects further. Associations and activities of college life were well-rounded. Less duplication and repetition resulted in better morale. It was low in cost; had better general education facilities, and gave better preparation for higher education." (19)

In the fall of 1959, the National League for Nursing distributed a questionnaire to 45 of the 48 associate degree programs in nursing that were at that time approved by state licensing authorities and to one program that was in the process of acquiring such approval. Forty-four of the questionnaires were returned. These plus information provided by the NLN Research and Studies Service and the NLN Evaluation Service form the basis of a Report on the Associate Degree Program. Twenty-one of the twenty-six schools that had graduated students reported on what positions their graduates held. Sixty-three percent were in staff nurse positions. Approximately eight percent were in a leadership position, such as head nurse, public health nurse, supervisor, or instructor. Almost six percent were either a private duty nurse or office nurse. Five percent were full-time students in a baccalaureate program. It would appear that the majority are holding positions on the level for which they were prepared.(36)

In a study done by Ruth Matheney the opinions of all the graduates of the Queens College Nursing Science Program for the years 1956 through 1959 were obtained. The graduates received a questionnaire designed to determine whether they felt their basic nursing program had satisfactorily prepared them to function as registered nurses. Sixty percent of the graduates responded. The Queen College

graduates indicated that their greatest difficulty was with hospital administrative routines, primarily those of relieving the head nurse on her days off and carrying out hospital paper work. This was also the area in which they were least prepared. The graduates gave "lack of orientation" and "lack of experience" as the major reasons for this difficulty. The majority of these graduates indicated they derived their greatest satisfaction in providing direct nursing care to patients. About seventy-four percent indicated they were best prepared to give direct patient care.(23)

Summary

The development of associate degree programs was the result of research which was carried out under the Cooperative Research Project in Junior and Community College Education for Nursing. The graduate of the associate degree program is prepared to function at the bedside doing the technical and semi-professional skills. It is hoped this new kind of program will produce more nurses and will also help to improve patient care. Many studies have been done and need to continue to be done in follow-up of new graduates. Throughout the research done on the associate degree graduate it has been found that she is generally satisfied with her preparation. She enjoys and feels well prepared in

giving bedside care. Most studies indicate approximately two-thirds of the graduates are functioning in staff nurse positions. Sometimes these graduates are given the responsibility of leadership positions and have difficulty in assuming this role. Lack of practical experience and leadership skills are the most frequent weakness of the program mentioned by the graduates.

CHAPTER III
REPORT OF THE STUDY

Setting for The Study

Buechel says that the success of the approach to nursing education used by the associate degree programs, depends a great deal on the mutual relationship that develops between nursing faculty and junior college educators.(7) Such a relationship was initiated in 1953, when the Idaho Falls Hospital Board, the Ricks College Administration, and the Idaho State Board of Nurse Registration and Nursing Education held a joint meeting to discuss the possibility of an associate degree nursing program at Ricks College.(16)

In March 1956, the President of the Ricks College, John L. Clarke conferred with Dr. Margaret Bridgman concerning collegiate programs of nursing. Further help and planning took place when President Clarke and Mrs. Catherine Howland, who became Head of the Associate Degree Program at Ricks College, attended the First Western Regional Workshop in Junior College Education for Nurses in Los Angeles, at which the associate degree nursing program was studied. Continued work and planning took place and in June 1957, Mrs. Catherine Howland was appointed Head

of the Department of Nursing at Ricks College wherein an associate degree program of nursing was established. The first class of students was admitted in September, 1957. The philosophy and objectives that set the guidelines for the beginning classes are cited in Appendix D.

The philosophy and objectives essentially remained the same during the first five graduating classes from 1959 to 1963. There have been curriculum changes made in time span and semester sequence in the nursing courses. Operating Room experience was included only as a "post graduate" course for the first class then it was added as a part of the medical-surgical nursing course for the remaining classes.

Changes have occurred in the general education course requirements. The first graduating class enrolled for courses in mathematics and nutrition which were then dropped from the curriculum. The latter graduating classes had more selection in liberal arts electives.

Design of The Study

This study is a normative, comparative, survey of the first five graduating classes, 1959 to 1963 from Ricks College in the field of nursing. The questionnaire was selected as the most appropriate means by which to obtain the information from graduates dispersed widely across the

country. The purposes, limitations and assumptions of this study have been stated in Chapter I.

The Ricks College Department of Nursing recognized the need for follow-up of their graduates. Being a new school with the pressures of curriculum development it was decided not to develop an original tool so the Department Head wrote to Dr. Mildred Montag and obtained permission to use the "Interview Guide--General Duty Nurse." This was the tool used in the Cooperative Research Project in Junior and Community College Education for Nursing which was carried out at Teachers College, Columbia University from 1952 to 1957.

Beginning in 1960 the Ricks College Department of Nursing sent this questionnaire to each graduate a year after she graduated. The importance of a follow-up study had previously been discussed with the students in order to enhance their cooperation in returning the questionnaire.

At the time of this current study permission was obtained to use the questionnaires the Ricks College Department had received from the graduates in the classes from 1959 to 1962. It was necessary to modify this questionnaire for use in this study. Only the questions related to the purpose of this study were used and the rest deleted.

As the returns from the questionnaires already sent by the Ricks College Department of Nursing were not adequate,

(42 out of 105) additional questionnaires accompanied by a cover letter (see Appendix A) were sent to the graduates who had not responded in the classes from 1959 to 1962, and also to the entire class of 1963. A follow-up letter (see Appendix B) was necessary in order to bring the total number of questionnaires returned by the graduates to seventy-one percent (91 out of 128).

The remainder of this chapter will be concerned with presentation and interpretation of the data collected from the questionnaires.

Presentation and Interpretation of Data

Opinions of Graduates Concerning Their Preparation

Item 1 of the questionnaire was "Now that you have the practical experience of working as a graduate nurse, how do you feel about your preparation of the job(s) you have had in nursing?" The graduates of Ricks College in general were satisfied with their preparation. A total of 45 (49%) graduates from the five graduating classes responded that their preparation was adequate without reservation. Thirty-nine (43%) of the ninety-one participants had reservations concerning the adequacy of their preparation. Fifty percent of this group (23% of total group) indicated that their preparation was lacking in practical experience. One participant stated:

I feel that in general my preparation was adequate, however I certainly lacked self confidence. I had been taught many things from textbooks, lectures, etc., but many things I had never really seen in actuality. I feel that more actual experience in hospital and doctor's offices would have helped.

Forty-eight percent of the group with reservations (20% of total group) indicated that their preparation lacked in preparation for leadership skills. One graduate stated:

In most cases I felt preparation was adequate. However, in the area of administration, charging divisions, etc., I felt lacking in knowledge of the duties I had to perform.

Other responses indicated there was not enough preparation and responsibility given in Operating Room, Obstetrics and Pediatrics. One respondent said:

I feel it was basically very good but that we should have had more responsibility similar to that we would have to accept upon graduation. I feel this could have been emphasized more than it was in our last month of training by the absence of an instructor to lean on.

Dr. Montag had similar findings to these. In general the associate degree graduates in her study felt their preparation was adequate without reservations. The group who had reservations expressed major concerns for lack of practical experience and leadership skills.(25)

The tabulation of the responses from item 1 of the questionnaire will be found in Table I.

Table 1. Number and Percentage of Responses of 91 Graduates of An Associate Degree Program to The Question: Now That You Have The Practical Experience of Working As A Graduate Nurse, How Do You Feel About Your Preparation of The Job(s) You Have Had in Nursing?

Response	Class		1960		1961		1962		1963		Total	
	1959 N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Adequate without reservations	6	50	9	45	10	43	12	52	8	62	45	49
Adequate with reservations	4	33	11	55	9	39	10	44	5	38	39	43
All negative	2	17	0	0	2	9	1	4	0	0	5	6
No response	0	0	0	0	2	9	0	0	0	0	2	2
Total	12	100	20	100	23	100	23	100	13	100	91	100

Item 1A of the questionnaire read: "Do you feel that any parts of your preparation were particularly good for the kind of nursing required of you in this job?" Seventy-eight (86%) of the graduates indicated that some part of their preparation was particularly good for the kind of nursing required of them. The most frequent good part that was mentioned was nurse-patient relationships. One response was:

The attitude we were taught toward our patients- mutual respect, remembering their sense of modesty and "feeling for" their needs.

Another comment was:

The best one is just plain and simply the nurse patient relationships.

This finding agrees with Gips whose most consistent finding concerning her graduates was satisfactory relationships with their patients.(13) Hiatt, described the associate degree graduate as one who had an education emphasizing the patient and his need for emotional support.(15)

Bedside nursing care was the next most frequently mentioned part of the preparation that was particularly good for the kind of nursing required for the associate degree graduates. One graduate stated:

You usually always find your 2-year graduates doing bedside nursing.

Another responded this way:

I feel that our training in bedside nursing care was particularly good and in organizing our work.

Dr. Montag's findings showed "the quality of nursing care taught" as the most frequent good part of the graduates' preparation.(25)

Several respondents mentioned medications in general while others specified area's of knowledge and experience.

One respondent mentioned other functions such as:

I feel the training for passing and preparing medications was excellent. I felt secure in starting IV's, irrigations and dressing changes for either Pediatric, Medical or Surgical floors.

"Team nursing" and "excellent classes in the biological sciences" were mentioned several times. All of the clinical nursing areas were mentioned a few times. Other aspects mentioned only once or twice as particularly good parts of their preparation were: thoracic clinic; planning patient care; good individual grooming; strictness in following regulations; general education; being taught the "why" and causes of various problems; and theory classes.

The tabulation of the responses from item 1A of the questionnaire will be found in Table 2.

Table 2. Number and Percentage of Responses of 91 Graduates of An Associate Degree Program to The Question: Do You Feel That Any Parts of Your Preparation Were Particularly Good for The Kind of Nursing Required of You in This Job?

Response	Class 1959		1960		1961		1962		1963		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	9	75	19	95	19	83	18	78	13	100	78	86
No	1	8	0	0	1	4	5	22	0	0	7	8
Not answered	2	17	1	5	3	13	0	0	0	0	6	6
Total	12	100	20	100	23	100	23	100	13	100	91	100

Item 1B of the questionnaire read: "Do you feel that any parts of your preparation were not adequate for the kind of nursing required of you in this job?" Sixty-nine

(76%) of the participants cited some part of their preparation as not adequate for the kind of nursing required of them in their jobs. Thirty (42%) of this group (33% of total group) said they needed more experience in administrative and leadership roles. Many of the graduates found themselves assuming charge nurse or other positions of leadership. One response was:

In working as a team leader I have felt that although we were trained to be bedside nurses upon becoming Registered Nurses we are given the leadership positions which we were not actually trained for. Even though the purpose of the 2-year program might be to produce bedside nurses the number of RN's seem yet too small. The RN's (regardless of training as to number of years) are those in charge while LPN's and aids give the actual bedside nursing care.

This response agrees with one made by a graduate replying to the study made by RN magazine who said "Being a good bedside nurse isn't enough as we are pushed into a charge position before we can handle it." (37) Lewis also indicated that some associate degree graduates function as team leaders and headnurses. (21) Matheney indicated that associate degree graduates have the greatest difficulty in administrative positions and are least prepared for this role. (23)

The need for leadership experience was the most frequent response. The rest of the responses dealt with the need for more experience ranging from general practical

experience to experience in surgery, obstetrics, pediatrics, emergency room, medications, and isolation.

The tabulation of the responses from item 1B of the questionnaire will be found in Table 3.

Table 3. Number and Percentage of Responses of 91 Graduates of An Associate Degree Program to The Question: Do You Feel That Any Parts of Your Preparation Were Not Adequate for The Kind of Nursing Required of You in This Job?

Response	Class 1959		1960		1961		1962		1963		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	9	75	16	80	18	78	17	74	9	69	69	76
No	3	25	4	20	4	18	6	26	4	31	21	23
Not answered	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total	12	100	20	100	23	100	23	100	13	100	91	100

Item 2 of the questionnaire read: "Do you have any suggestions as to how your entire educational program might have been improved?" Sixty-one (67%) of the respondents had suggestions as to how their educational program might have been improved. Only two responses dealt with the general curriculum and they were:

General chemistry should be a required subject. Lacking in college training because of the numerous irrelevant subjects.

The remainder of the suggestions dealt with the nursing curriculum and followed the same pattern shown in the previous findings. The most frequent suggestion being "more responsibility and leadership experience." The next most frequent suggestion being "the need for more practical experience."

The tabulation of the responses from item 2 of the questionnaire will be found in Table 4.

Table 4. Number and Percentage of Responses of 91 Graduates of An Associate Degree Program to The Question: Do You Have Any Suggestions As to How Your Entire Educational Program Might Have Been Improved?

Response	Class 1959		1960		1961		1962		1963		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	8	67	11	55	13	57	17	74	12	92	61	67
No	3	25	8	40	7	30	4	17	1	8	23	25
Not answered	1	8	1	5	3	13	2	9	0	0	7	8
Total	12	100	20	100	23	100	23	100	13	100	91	100

Outstanding Features and Weaknesses of Program

In regard to item 3, ninety of the ninety-one participants cited outstanding features of their program, the most frequent of which was the length of the program with fifty-five comments. The advantage of being on college campus where students can participate with other college students

as well as obtaining a well rounded education was mentioned forty-six times.

Mildred Montag's study gave "length of program" as the second most frequent outstanding feature and "attending college" as the most frequent outstanding feature of the pilot programs.(25)

One third of the participants mentioned the preparation and understanding attitude of the instructors as an outstanding feature. Almost equal comments were made in areas of bedside care, patient centered care and experience adequate in all phases.

In regard to Item 4, eighty-four (92%) respondents commented on weaknesses of the program, but the remaining 7 (8%) did not respond. The responses concerning weaknesses were primarily concerned with nursing. Heading the list of weaknesses was lack of practical experience with 47 responses and lack of leadership experience with 23 responses. Mildred Montag found lack of practical experience to be the most frequent comment by the pilot-program graduates.(25)

Lack of acceptance of the "2-year RN" was mentioned by 16 of the participants listing weaknesses. Specialized areas in nursing such as operating room, obstetrics, psychiatrics, and pediatrics were mentioned 44 times as a weakness which seemed to be centered on the time factor.

The tabulation of the responses from items 3 and 4 of the questionnaire will be found in Table 5.

Table 5. Number of Responses of 91 Graduates of An Associate Degree Program Concerning Outstanding and Weak Aspects of Their Program.

Aspects of the Nursing Program Related to:	Outstanding Number of times mentioned N 90	Weakness Number of times mentioned N 84
Length of program	55	5
College life	46	1
Cost	5	2
Instructors-preparation & understanding	29	5
Adequate in general	14	
Planning & organization	12	4
Nursing theory	11	2
Not service oriented	3	
Travel to hospital		5
Learned willingness to do all tasks	3	
Field trips	4	
Becoming an RN	4	
Ease of going on to school	3	
Size of nursing laboratory group	3	4
Testing & grading	3	
Lack of acceptance		16
Nursing preparation:		
practical experience		47
supervision		2
patient centered	15	
bedside care	15	
leadership experience	5	23
ethics	4	1
medication experience	6	5
selected learning experience	3	1
specialized areas	7	44
experience on all shifts		6
Total	250	173
Average number of aspects cited per participant	2.8	2.1

Positions Held by Graduates

In regard to item 5 all respondents answering the questionnaire report initial employment as nurses. Seventy-five percent of the respondents report initial employment as staff nurses, twenty-one percent as charge nurses and four percent as office nurses. These findings compare closely to those of Edith Lewis (21), Mildred Montag (25), and National League for Nursing (36), all of whom found that between 63 and 71 percent of the associate degree graduates in their studies were employed in staff nurse positions. These studies as well as those of RN magazine (37), and Ruth Matheney (23) all indicate some of their graduates are employed in leadership positions. The National League for Nursing indicates 7% of 1045 associate degree graduates are in leadership positions; the other studies give no definite number. It would appear that this study shows a higher percent of graduates in leadership positions than do these other studies. Nineteen of ninety-one took initial positions of responsibility beyond that for which they were prepared. To determine the reason for this, is beyond the scope of this study.

The tabulation of the responses from item 5 of the questionnaire will be found in Table 6.

Table 6. Number and Percentage of Responses of 91 Graduates of An Associate Degree Program Concerning The Type of Initial Positions They Have Taken.

Position	Class 1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	All Classes	
						N	%
Staff nurse	8	11	18	20	11	68	75
Charge nurse	2	8	4	3	2	19	21
Office Nurse	2	1	1	0	0	4	4
Total	12	20	23	23	13	91	100

Continuing Education

In regard to item 6, eleven participants (12%) returned for further education in nursing with a Bachelors Degree as their goal with exception of one who became a nurse anesthetist. Eight participants (9%) continued their education in a field other than nursing. These eight graduates continued their education in the following fields: general education, music, psychology education, history, humanities, home economics, dance, physical education and religion. Seventy-two (79%) of the graduates did not pursue further education.

These findings seem to agree with other studies. Wilma Hiatt stated that most of the associate degree graduates do not seek further education.(15) Laura Dustan

indicated that the associate degree graduates' short term goals are commensurate with the objectives of their program and their immediate plans are that of employment.(8)

The tabulation of responses from item 6 of the questionnaire will be found in Table 7.

Table 7. Number and Percentage of Responses of 91 Graduates of An Associate Degree Program to A Question Concerning Whether They Are Continuing Their Education.

Response	Class 1959		1960		1961		1962		1963		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Graduates who have continued in nursing education.	2	17	2	10	2	9	4	17	1	8	11	12
Graduates who have continued in education other than nursing.	0	0	2	10	4	17	2	9	0	0	8	9
Graduates who have not pursued further education.	10	83	16	80	17	74	17	74	12	92	72	79
Total	12	100	20	100	23	100	23	100	13	100	91	100

CHAPTER IV
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to obtain the opinions of ninety-one nurses who completed an associate degree program in nursing between 1959 to 1963. The following are the questions for which the study sought to find specific answers:

1. What are the expressed opinions of the graduates concerning the adequacy of their preparation for their jobs?
2. What are the expressed opinions of the graduates concerning how their educational program might have been improved?
3. What are the expressed opinions of the graduates concerning the outstanding features of their program?
4. What are the expressed opinions of the graduates concerning the weaknesses of their program?
5. What are the initial positions of the graduates?
6. Are the initial positions of the graduates at the level for which the graduate was prepared?
7. Are these graduates seeking further nursing education?

Responses to these questions were obtained by questionnaire. The information obtained from these questionnaires and a

review of the literature and related studies form the basis for the findings and conclusions summarized as follows:

Findings

1. The graduates of Ricks College Nursing Program generally indicated that their preparation was adequate. Forty-five (49%) of the respondents had no reservations, but thirty-nine (43%) had reservations concerning the adequacy of their preparation. Twenty-three percent of the total group stated their preparation lacked in practical experience; twenty percent cited lack of leadership skills; six percent said their preparation was inadequate; and two percent gave no response.

2. Seventy-eight (86%) of the graduates responded that some part of their preparation was particularly good for the kind of nursing required of them. "Nurse patient relationship" headed this list with "bedside nursing care" next.

3. Sixty-nine (76%) of the participants indicated that some part of their preparation was not adequate for the kind of nursing required of them in their job; twenty-one (23%) stated all their preparation was adequate; one (1%) gave no response. Of the group that cited inadequacies in their preparation, 30 (42%) indicated they needed more experience in administrative and leadership roles.

The rest of the responses dealt with the need for more experience.

4. Sixty-one (67%) of the participants had suggestions as to how their educational program might have been improved. Only two of these comments dealt with the general curriculum while the remainder were concerned with the nursing curriculum. The majority of the suggestions were the need for more responsibility and leadership experience and more practical experience.

5. Ninety of the ninety-one respondents cited outstanding features of their program. Fifty-five stated the length of the program was an outstanding feature; forty-six mentioned college life with a well rounded education; and twenty nine responded that the preparation and understanding attitude of the instructors were an outstanding feature of their program. Other responses were made concerning bedside care, patient centered care, experience in all phases, nursing theory, well planned program, medication experience and cost.

6. Eighty-four (92%) of the respondents commented on weaknesses of the program. These responses were primarily concerned with the lack of practical and leadership experience.

7. All respondents reported initial employment as nurses with seventy-five percent as staff nurses, twenty-one

percent as charge nurses and four percent as office nurses.

8. Eleven (12%) have sought further education in nursing; eight (9%) have continued their education in a field other than nursing; seventy-two (79%) have sought no further education at the time of this study.

Conclusions

The purposes of this study have been achieved. The findings as reported in Chapter III are consistent with the literature and lead to the following conclusions:

1. The majority (79%) of the graduates of Ricks College Associate Degree Program in Nursing were initially employed in first level nursing positions within the scope of their preparation. These persons generally expressed satisfaction with the preparation they had received for nursing. It would appear that most of those who were functioning within the scope of their preparation, were satisfied with their preparation. Some of this group qualified their statements or expressed some reservations. This study did not investigate the reasons for satisfaction or dissatisfaction. It is not known how much any of the comments have been influenced by employment experiences.

2. Twenty-one percent of the respondents accepted initial employment in positions accompanied by responsibility beyond the scope for which these nurses had been

prepared. This study did not attempt to determine the reasons for such choice. The findings of this study, however, have vocational guidance implications which the faculty should not overlook.

3. Many statements were made concerning strengths and weaknesses of the associate degree program in nursing. In part, these seem to cancel out each other as illustrated by "length of program" which some listed as a strength and others as a weakness.

4. Some of the graduates of the associate degree program expect that they should be prepared for leadership positions. The literature and their comments seem to indicate that this is partly due to the expectations of nursing service. In view of this expectation of the Associate Degree Graduates of Ricks College, the Nursing Faculty need to review their philosophy and objectives for clarity in respect to the graduates being prepared to function at first level positions in nursing.

Recommendations for Further Study

1. Conduct a follow-up study of associate degree graduates to determine the employers' opinion as to how well the nurses are functioning.

2. In view of the very large percent of the participants in this study who assumed initial nursing employment with responsibilities beyond the scope for which they were

prepared, it is recommended that an investigation be made: (a) of the reasons students currently enrolled have chosen to enter this school and (b) of their understanding of the objectives of an associate degree program in nursing.

3. Make an analysis of the comments made concerning the program. Compare strong features with the weaknesses as a basis for ascertaining if there are needed curriculum adjustments. Review the extraneous comments for their implications for recruitment, public relations and possible student guidance.

4. Investigate the reasons for the choice of the initial position in nursing. Attempt to ascertain what factors influence the choice, particularly of those whose first positions are accompanied by responsibility for which they are unprepared.

5. Since the expectations of the participants did not always appear to be realistic in terms of what they should expect to be able to perform at the time of their initial employment, it is recommended that a comparative study be made of the expectations graduates of other types of nursing programs have for themselves to determine if the graduates of associate degree programs in nursing hold expectations that differ from those expressed by other recent graduates of schools of nursing.

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APPENDIX A

February 24, 1964

Dear

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 graduates of the Ricks College School of Nursing. This is a follow-up study about you. I want to find out how you feel about your preparation now that you are working as a registered nurse. Your opinion and advice is important to your school in helping to plan the curriculum for the future.

As a graduate of the school you are in the best position to evaluate how successful your education has been. Enclosed is a questionnaire which includes instructions for answering, and a self addressed envelope for returning the questionnaire to me upon completion. Names will not be used in the study and all of your comments will remain confidential. Only YOU can answer these questions.

Upon completion of the study, copies of the report will be placed in the libraries at the University of Oregon Medical School and at Ricks College.

Sincerely,

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

Thesis Adviser

APPENDIX B

6309 S.W. 32nd Ave.
Portland, Oregon
April 19, 1964

Dear

During March I sent you a questionnaire asking your opinion about your experience as a nurse. I have not had enough questionnaires returned to make my study valid. If you have not returned yours, may I encourage you to do so. As I am not including names, many are not signed so I cannot be sure which ones are missing; if you have already returned your questionnaire, please disregard this letter. I do appreciate your help in making this a valid and useful study.

Sincerely,

Lucy Legg

APPENDIX C

A QUESTIONNAIRE FOR A FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF THE
GRADUATES OF THE RICKS COLLEGE NURSING SCHOOL

Please answer the following questions in the space provided. If this is not enough space please continue your answer on the back of the sheet. If it has been more than a year since you graduated, try to think back to your first year's experience in answering the first question.

1. Now that you have the practical experience of working as a graduate nurse, how do you feel about your preparation for the job(s) you have had in nursing?

a. Do you feel that any parts of your preparation were particularly good for the kind of nursing required of you in this job? Yes _____ No _____

Which parts?

In what ways?

- b. Do you feel that any parts of your preparation were not adequate for the kind of nursing required of you in this job? Yes _____ No _____

Which parts?

In what ways?

How might they have been improved?

2. Do you have any suggestions as to how your entire educational program might have been improved?
Yes _____ No _____
What are they?

3. What do you now consider to be the three outstanding features of your program?

4. What do you consider to be the three weaknesses of your program?

5. Since your graduation where have you been working?

Position	Institution	From	To
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

6. Have you attended school at all since graduation?

Yes _____ No _____

School	Type of course work	Goal
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Please return the questionnaire before March 31, 1964 to:

Lucy Legg
6309 S.W. 32nd Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97201

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE
AND FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY

APPENDIX D
PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES OF
RICKS COLLEGE NURSING DEPARTMENT

In addition to the general college objectives leading to the development of a well-rounded individual, the Nursing Department provides learning experiences which will enable the graduate of this program to perform the functions commonly associated with the registered nurse.

The specific objectives of the Nursing Department are to help students develop in the following areas:

Understanding

1. Understands the principles related to the nursing care of a person who has a deviation from health.
2. Understands the principles necessary for planning comprehensive patient care.
3. Understands the therapeutic measures as they are prescribed and delegated by medical authority.
4. Understands how to evaluate symptoms, reactions and progress, and how to communicate her observations by writing and speaking.
5. Understands the need for, and the measures necessary to rehabilitation of the patient.
6. Understands how mental, emotional, physical, social and spiritual processes influence health.
7. Understands how to preserve and promote health, and how to use the community resources devoted to this objective.
8. Understands the necessity for, and the principles of, teaching health to others.
9. Understands the principles of interpersonal relations and communications.

Skills

1. Has the ability to perform nursing procedures and apply the scientific principles upon which the procedures are based.
2. Has the ability to plan and execute total patient care which includes observing and recognizing symptoms, progress and reactions.
3. Has the ability to execute therapeutic measures as they are prescribed and delegated by medical authority.
4. Has the ability to assist in patient education and rehabilitation including promotion of mental and physical health.
5. Has the ability to utilize community resources.
6. Has the ability to establish and maintain good interpersonal relationships with patients, doctors, and all other people with whom she is in contact.
7. Has the ability to communicate effectively.

Attitudes

1. Gives the same high quality of nursing care without regard to sex, age, race, class, creed, or economic status.
2. Changes nursing care and health teaching to the needs of each patient and when prejudice or superstitions are present adapts to them with tact, tolerance, sympathy and understanding.
3. Actively participates in nursing organizations and interprets their role in the community.
4. Fulfills community obligations as a citizen and as a nurse.
5. Assumes responsibility for professional growth and development.

6. Sees the patient not only as an individual in the sickroom but as a member of a family and a community.
7. Strives to maintain good interpersonal relationships and effective communication. (39)

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Lucy Legg

for the Master of Science in Nursing

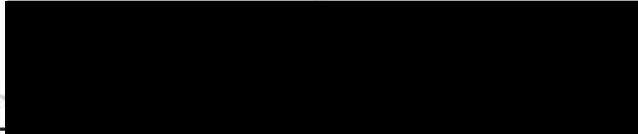
Date of receiving this degree:

June 9, 1966

Title:

A Follow-Up Study of Ninety-
One Graduates of An Associate
Degree Program in Nursing
1959-1963

Approved:


Lucile Gregerson, Associate Professor in Charge
of Thesis

THE PROBLEM

The Ricks College Associate Degree Nursing Program follows the new pattern of nursing education. The purpose of this study was to follow-up the graduates of the Ricks College Nursing Program for the years, 1959 to 1963. The following are the questions for which the study seeks to find specific answers:

1. What are the expressed opinions of the graduates concerning the adequacy of their preparation for their jobs?
2. What are the expressed opinions of the graduates concerning how their educational program might have been improved?
3. What are the expressed opinions of the graduates concerning the outstanding features of their program?
4. What are the expressed opinions of the graduates concerning the weaknesses of their program?
5. What are the initial positions of the graduates?
6. Are the initial positions of the graduates at the level for which the graduate was prepared?
7. Are these graduates seeking further nursing education?

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCEDURE

Permission was obtained to use the questionnaires the Ricks College Department of Nursing had received from the graduates in the classes from 1959 to 1962. It was necessary to modify this questionnaire; only the questions related to the purpose of this study were used

and the rest deleted. Additional questionnaires were sent the graduates who had not responded in the classes from 1959 to 1962, and also to the entire class of 1963. The data were analyzed and tabulated to illustrate the findings.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The findings were as follows:

1. The Graduates of Ricks College Nursing Program were generally satisfied with their preparation.
2. Eighty-six percent of the graduates responded that some parts of their preparation were particularly good for the kind of nursing required of them.
3. Seventy-six percent of the participants indicated that some parts of their preparation were not adequate for the kind of nursing required of them in their job.
4. Sixty-seven percent of the participants had suggestions as to how their educational program might have been improved, the majority dealing with the need for more responsibility and leadership experience and more practical experience.
5. Outstanding and weak aspects of the program were cited by the majority of the respondents. Many of the outstanding features mentioned were outside the

field of nursing; the comments concerning the weaknesses were primarily concerned with nursing.

6. All respondents reported initial employment as nurses with seventy-five percent as staff nurses, twenty-one percent as charge nurses and four percent as office nurses.

7. Twelve percent of the graduates have sought further education in nursing.

CONCLUSIONS

From the findings of this study, the following conclusions may be drawn.

1. The majority (79%) of the graduates of Ricks College Associate Degree Program in Nursing were initially employed in first level nursing positions within the scope of their preparation. These persons generally expressed satisfaction with the preparation they had received for nursing. It would appear that most of those who were functioning within the scope of their preparation, were satisfied with their preparation. Some of this group qualified their statements or expressed some reservations. This study did not investigate the reasons for satisfaction or dissatisfaction. It is not known how much any of the comments have been influenced by employment experiences.

2. Twenty-one percent of the respondents accepted initial employment in positions accompanied by responsibility beyond the scope for which these nurses had been prepared. This study did not attempt to determine the reasons for such choice. The findings of this study, however, have vocational guidance implications which the faculty should not overlook.

3. Many statements were made concerning strengths and weaknesses of the associate degree program in nursing. In part, these seem to cancel out each other as illustrated by "length of program" which some listed as a strength and others as a weakness.

4. Some of the graduates of the associate degree program expect that they should be prepared for leadership positions. The literature and their comments seem to indicate that this is partly due to the expectations of nursing service. In view of this expectation of the Associate Degree Graduates of Ricks College, the Nursing Faculty need to review their philosophy and objectives for clarity in respect to the graduates being prepared to function at first level positions in nursing.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The recommendations for further study were:

1. Conduct a follow-up study of associate degree

graduates to determine the employers' opinion as to how well the nurses are functioning.

2. In view of the very large percent of the participants in this study who assumed initial nursing employment with responsibilities beyond the scope for which they were prepared, it is recommended that an investigation be made: (a) of the reasons students currently enrolled have chosen to enter this school and (b) of their understanding of the objectives of an associate degree program in nursing.

3. Make an analysis of the comments made concerning the program. Compare strong features with the weaknesses as a basis for ascertaining if there are needed curriculum adjustments. Review the extraneous comments for their implications for recruitment, public relations and possible student guidance.

4. Investigate the reasons for the choice of the initial position in nursing. Attempt to ascertain what factors influence the choice, particularly of those whose first positions are accompanied by responsibility for which they are unprepared.

5. Since the expectations of the participants did not always appear to be realistic in terms of what they should expect to be able to perform at the time of their employment, it is recommended that a comparative study

be made of the expectations graduates of other types of nursing programs have for themselves to determine if the graduates of associate degree programs in nursing hold expectations that differ from those expressed by other recent graduates of schools of nursing.