

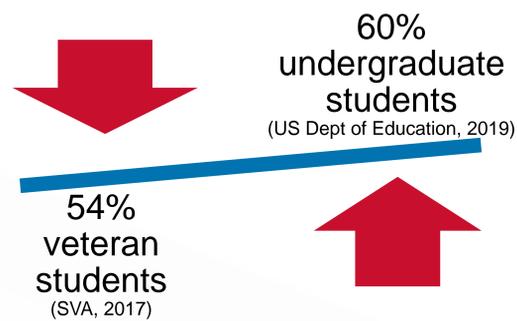


Success Strategies for Undergraduate Nursing Students Transitioning from Military Healthcare Careers: A Qualitative Study

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BACKGROUND

National Graduation Rates



- Veteran students less successful in college
- Dwindling nursing population; 200,000+ new nurses needed annually (Torpey, 2018)
- Under-utilized, skilled veteran population with medical military occupational specialty (MOS)

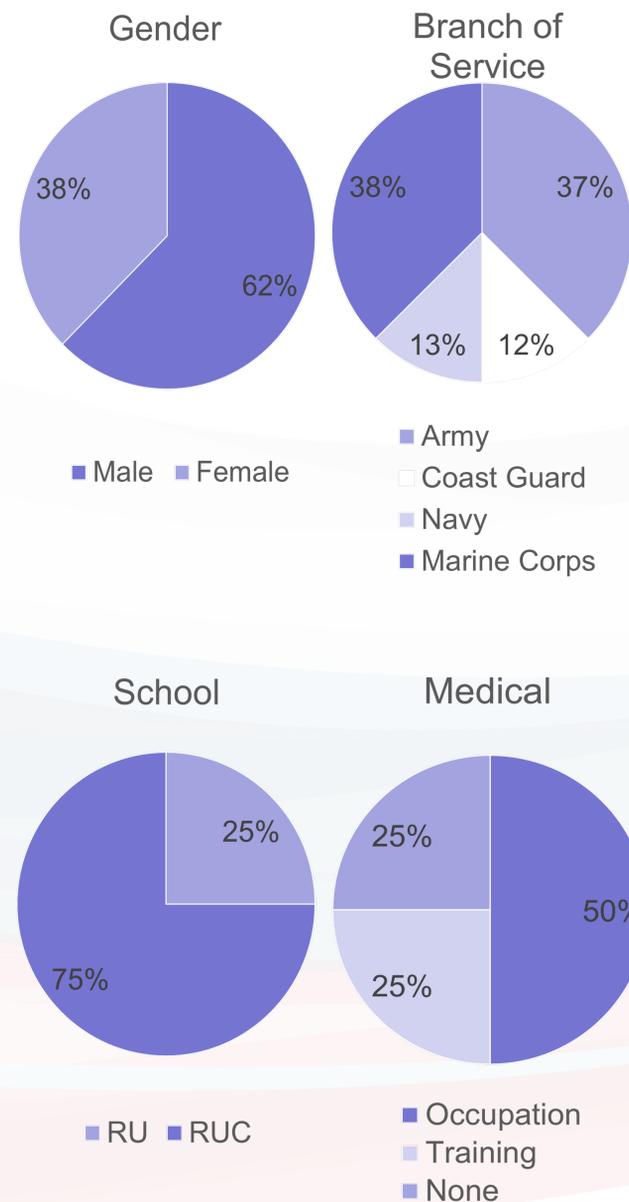
Purpose of Research – To better understand the strategies veteran students are using to succeed as they transition from the military into undergraduate nursing programs.

METHODS

- **Study Design:** Qualitative exploration using semi-structured interviews (N=8)
- **Theoretical Frameworks:** Constructivist Theory and Schlossberg’s Transition Model (4S- Situation, Self, Support, and Strategies)
- **Target Population** – Veteran undergraduate nursing students attending Radford University (n=2) and Radford University Carilion (n=6)
- Interviews recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using Dedoose 8.2.32
- Team independently coded meaning units (mu) into overall themes and categories; inter-rater reliability Cohen’s kappa=.92

RESULTS

Participant Demographics



Overall Study Themes

Military Role (N=142 mu)

- Medical role, medical training, or none

Success Defined (N=104 mu)

- Good grades, graduating, becoming a nurse

Challenges (N=218 mu)

- Lack of support, lifestyle changes, difficulty communicating

“Feel like you’re alone”
“Miss the comradery”

Success Strategies (N=429 mu)

- Good communication

“Don’t be afraid to ask.”
“Communicating with people from different backgrounds.”

- Extracurricular programs

“Get to know other veterans.”
“Having other people to relate.”

- Grit/motivation

“Just get it done.”
“Failure is not an option.”
“Refuse to quit.”

Military Integration (N=22 mu)

Re-integrating back into civilian culture

DISCUSSION

- Findings mirror challenges in existing literature
- Success strategies aligned with theoretical frameworks:
 - **Constructivist Theory:** Communication skills, Leadership, and Grit
 - **Schlossberg’s Transition Model:** Support and Strategies

Recommendations

Military Resource Center (MRC)

- Supports veterans during transition
- Assists with military paperwork
- Connects students with other veterans

Veteran Coordinator/Advisor

- Navigates coursework/enrollment
- Assists with community resources

Implement Veteran-BSN (VBSN)

- Supports and recognizes previous training
- Makes RU-RUC more competitive among veteran schools

All recommendations align with RU Strategic Goals for 2018-2023

CONCLUSION

- Success strategies not based on MOS, can be generalized to veteran student population
- An active MRC is a strategy to increase veteran student engagement, satisfaction, and success

References

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