



# **Expanded Collaborative Evaluation of Student Performance, Experience, and Outcomes in Registered Practical Nurse – Nursing Degree (RPN-BScN) Bridging Education**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**A Research Project Funded by the Ontario  
Consortium on Articulation and Transfer  
(ONCAT) and Collaboratively Conducted by:**

**Durham College (DC)  
George Brown College (GBC)  
Georgian College (GC)  
Nipissing University (NU)  
Trent University (TU)  
University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT)**



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This project was constructed through three main research foci and a dissemination and sharing phase. Through a robust and highly collaborative relationship among 6 academic institutions involved in providing RPN-to-BScN bridging education, key insights were gained into the performance and behaviours of current students, the characteristics of applicants, the experiences and perceptions of graduates, and the perspectives of employers and community/clinical partners. The six project partners (Durham College, George Brown College, Georgian College, Nipissing University, Trent University, and the University of Ontario Institute of Technology) represent fully 50% of the RPN-to-BScN bridging programs in the province.

**Phase 1** involved extensive analysis of registrarial data from all 6 project partners. Descriptive statistics are presented, including elements such as age, gender, admission GPA, drop out/stop out and program completion data. Additionally, higher level statistically analysis was conducted to examine the following 3 questions:

1. How does entrance GPA relate to overall cumulative GPA in the program?
2. Is the “bridge term” or “bridge component” GPA an indicator of overall ongoing GPA in the nursing program?
3. Is there a relationship between students’ entrance GPA and whether or not they complete the program?

**Phase 2** involved analysis of data from 195 students currently enrolled in the RPN-to-BScN programs of the six project partners. Data reveals a “snapshot” of current students, overwhelmingly female and largely with dependent care responsibilities. Elements such as income, work specialization and work hours, and anticipated debt were examined. Use and evaluation of academic services along with a wide range of factors (academic, personal, employment, and other) that may be facilitators or barriers to program success explored.

**Phase 3** involved analysis of data from multiple sources. Qualitative data collected from nursing bridging education faculty examining quality indicators in post-secondary/nursing education and how these are and are not reflected in RPN-to-BScN education was examined. Additionally, qualitative data collected from RPN-to-BScN program graduates examining their perceptions of the impact of bridging education on their personal and professional lives was explored. Finally, qualitative data collected from employers/community partners/clinical partners in relation to their perceptions of RPN-to-BScN education was examined.

**Phase 4** involved hosting a province-wide symposium sharing the results of this project and other ongoing bridging education research and educational initiatives. Participants included students, graduates, and faculty from across the province who shared experiences with nursing bridging education.

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