Factors Influencing Completion Status of Undergraduate Nursing Students Who Initiate Progression Appeals.

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FACTORS INFLUENCING COMPLETION STATUS OF UNDERGRADUATE NURSING STUDENTS WHO INITIATE PROGRESSION APPEALS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the School of Vocational Education

by

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .................................... ii

LIST OF TABLES ...................................... v

ABSTRACT .......................................... vii

CHAPTER

1 INTRODUCTION ............................... 1
   Statement of the Problem ..................... 4
   Purpose of the Study .......................... 5
   Objectives .................................... 5
   Significance of the Study .................... 6
   Definition of Terms ........................... 6

2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE ........................... 11
   Theoretical Framework .......................... 11
   Empowerment ................................... 11
   Progression and Retention ..................... 17
      Historical Perspective ...................... 17
      NLN Standards. .............................. 18
      ANA Standards. ............................. 20
      Legal Aspects of Appeals .................... 21
   Nursing Students Success. ..................... 24
      Second Chance. ................................ 24
   Predictors of Success .......................... 26
      Academic Predictors .......................... 26
      Demographic Predictors ....................... 31
         Age ....................................... 31
         Marital Status ............................ 32
         Gender .................................... 32
         Race ..................................... 33
         Residence. ................................ 33
         ACT Scores ................................ 34
         Remediation. ................................ 34
         Other Degrees. ............................. 35
         Pre-Nursing GPA on Required Courses. .... 35
         Overall GPA ............................... 35
         Clinical Settings. ........................... 36
   Evaluation of Students in the Classrooms
      and Clinical Areas ............................ 36
   Summary of Literature Review ................ 38

3 METHODOLOGY ................................. 41
   Setting ....................................... 41
   SLU Progression Procedure and Retention . 42
      Selective Progression and Retention in
         the School of Nursing. ..................... 42
   Progression Procedures and Policy. ......... 43
   Retention Procedures and Policy. ............. 45
   Functions at SLU .............................. 47
18. Unstandardized and Standardized Discriminant Function Coefficients for Explaining Graduation Status ............... 81

19. Actual versus Predicted Classification of Students to Graduate or Not Graduate. ........ 82
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this descriptive research study was to determine the existence of predictors for success of nursing students who are granted appeals, based on special circumstances, by the University Progression and Retention Committee of Southeastern Louisiana University. This study investigated demographics (age, marital status, gender, race, residence, semester of appeal, and educational background) of 302 nursing students from Southeastern Louisiana University (January 1988, to May 1995) that appealed to the Progression and Retention Committee of the university to continue in the nursing program. Success predictor criteria provided to nursing faculty and students can be used as a positive resource so that the nursing students and faculty can reach their goals of student graduation and licensure as a professional nurse.

All students with appeals granted were followed and information concerning their success was investigated. The continuous variables were analyzed using t-tests and discriminant analysis. The categorical variables were studied using Chi-square and discriminant analysis. According to the findings, most students appealing were white, single or divorced females, 20 - 24 years old, living in metropolitan areas. Little or no variation existed in the mean ACT scores of students filing an
appeal, and remediation did not appear to be a factor in students' appeals and graduation status. Mean GPAs of students filing for appeal that had other degrees were lower than students appealing without other degrees. Mean GPAs for students filing and granted appeals had increases in GPA between appeal and graduation or they were dropped from the program. Chi-square analysis indicated that none of the variables analyzed were independent of graduation status. The t-test analyses of continuous variables (age, ACT scores, pre-nursing GPA on required courses, and GPA at appeal) indicated no significant difference between the variables and graduation status. Discriminant analysis identified widowed, married, remediation, reason for appeal and GPA at appeal as significant predictors of appealing students' graduation success or failure. A prediction model was developed. The percent of 'grouped' cases correctly classified was 76.3%.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Abudur-Rahman, Femea, and Gaines (1994) found students who were able to score in the average range or above average on the Nursing Entrance Test (NET) have been successful in nursing courses if outside variables did not cause adverse influences on their nursing studies. Students identified as being successful were those who completed nursing courses and graduated with a degree in nursing. Half of the students who did not complete the nursing courses also scored below average on the Nursing Entrance Test (NET). Students failing to meet academic and non-academic requirements have been identified as having progression problems. Academic problems included failing to meet grade point average (GPA) requirements and/or failing to complete required courses in the designated semester. The non-academic problems were identified as failing to register in a timely fashion and other circumstances not related to grades. The progression and/or retention process for these students continue to be important to the success of nursing students and the nursing faculty who are directly responsible for the educational process.

Options that are available to the students who do not meet the needed academic progression requirements are well defined in the Southeastern Louisiana University Nursing Student Handbook (1994-1995). The appeals process, provided
by the University standards, was established in connection with the accreditation process, Board of Regents State of Louisiana (BRSL) and The National League of Nursing (NLN). Any nursing student choosing to appeal academic progression problems to the Progression and Retention Committee of the University/Department is limited in the appeal by the guidelines of the University (General Catalogue, 1994-95).

Nursing students not meeting identified requirements can appeal to the Progression and Retention Committee for special consideration. Nursing students who are granted appeals will have a second chance to meet requirements for graduation and licensure by the Louisiana State Board of Nursing (General Catalogue, 1994-95).

The Progression and Retention Committee at Southeastern Louisiana University is comprised of five members, each having one vote in each appeal process. The committee includes one faculty member from each of the three levels of the nursing program, one Ex-Officio faculty member and one elected nursing student. The decision of the Progression and Retention Committee is based on each independent request. The Dean of the Nursing School has the final decision on all appeals and may overrule the decision of the Progression and Retention Committee (General Catalogue, 1994-95).

Information which is provided by the students to the Progression and Retention Committee may contain evidence
that special circumstances existed which directly relate to conditions for which the students could not have anticipated or planned. Students with appeals denied are either retained to repeat that educational section or dismissed from the nursing school. If the appeal decision is in favor of the student he/she may continue with studies without restriction or with an identified probation period (Southeastern Louisiana University Nursing Student Handbook, 1995). The nursing student with appeals granted is then mainstreamed into the nursing class.

No research studies were found in Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), Cumulative Index to Nursing Allied Health Line (CINAHL), Medical Information Line (MEDLINE), National Technical Information Service (NTIS), Government Printing Office (GPO), and Proquest, which focused on predictors for success or failure of the nursing students who have been granted appeals. If a list of predictors could be established, nursing faculty and/or advisors could help nursing students with career plans and/or redirection of career opportunities. Nursing faculty would be able to provide support to students identified as needing career counseling. Nursing faculty would also be able to provide additional support in identified areas of need based on predictors.

After graduation and upon recommendation of the Dean of Nursing, nursing students proceed to take the State
Board Licensure Examination. Mastering the State Board Licensure Examination adequately is indicated by a passing grade. Nursing students then become professional Registered Nurses (RN). Student nurses failing the State Board Licensure Examination may retake the examination until a passing grade is achieved. If more than two chances at passing the examination are required, additional educational experiences may be required. Only after passing the State Board Licensure Examination can he/she work as an RN. The nursing students who appeal to the Progression and Retention Committee and who are allowed to continue in the nursing program must also master the State Board Licensure Examination in order to become RNs.

Statement of the Problem

An identified group of nursing students exists which has invested time and money in nursing as a career but has not succeeded in program progression toward graduation. These nursing students have been identified as being unable to meet the established criteria and/or the other requirements for progression in the nursing program. These same nursing students have appealed to the Progression and Retention Committee for special consideration related to identified unusual conditions. The Progression and Retention Committee has granted these nursing students permission to continue but no guidelines of support for these students have been developed. If predictors for
success can be established for this group of nursing students then perhaps these students could be supported in their educational process. Nursing faculty, using the same identified predictors, can formulate guidelines to support nursing students in their progression and/or retention appeals based on educationally sound research. Nursing faculty using these identified predictors may formulate guidelines for additional needed areas of support for nursing students. This additional support, based on the identified predictors, may help the nursing students be successful in their career choice.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research study was to determine the existence of predictors for success of nursing students who are granted appeals, based on special circumstances, by the University Progression and Retention Committee of Southeastern Louisiana University.

Objectives

The following objectives were used to guide the researcher in the study.

1. Describe, using demographic and academic data, the accessible population of nursing students who graduated following successful appeal or did not graduate (following successful or non-successful appeal) from the nursing program at Southeastern Louisiana University.
2. Compare those nursing students who successfully appealed and graduated to those who successfully appealed but did not graduate using independent continuous and categorical variables.

3. Determine if demographic and academic predictors of success exist for nursing students who have appealed for progression, and if significant predictors of success are found, describe the prediction model.

**Significance of the Study**

Faculty awareness of potential success predictors for nursing students may help with problem resolution, enhance academic support and/or assist career choices. Nursing faculty will benefit in their ability to support nursing students with special circumstances. These predictors will help the nursing student determine areas of needed improvement and provide encouragement for success. Predictors of success can be used as a positive resource for the nursing students and faculty to reach their goals of student graduation and licensure as a professional nurse.

**Definition of Terms**

The following terms have been operationally defined for this research study.

1. **Academic Appeals.** A process established by the University to allow students with special
circumstances to continue with the educational process (General Catalogue, 1994-95).

2. **Academic Appeal Routes.** An option provided to students, who are unable to continue the educational process in the conventional means, to make an appeal. The student has failed to meet the established criteria for progression (Southeastern Louisiana University Nursing Student Handbook, 1994).

3. **Demographics of individual nursing students.**
   Identified information on students from University Record that are facts which may not be significant alone but may become more significant when viewed as the sample population. For this research study, the following information was viewed as demographic:
   A. **Age.** Given in years using the last birthday.
   B. **Marital Status.** Given as married, single, divorced, or widowed.
   C. **Gender.** Male or female.
   D. **Race.** Given as white, black or other.
   E. **Residence.** Given as home parish of the students as listed at the time of appeal.

4. **Academic Data for Individual Nursing Students.**
   Identified information from University Records. The following information was viewed as academic:
   A. **American College Test (ACT).** A pre-college placement examination. The enhanced scores given
for ACT Math, ACT English, ACT Science and ACT Composite have been converted and provided for this research by the Southeastern Louisiana University admission office.

B. Remediation. Science, Math or English courses taken to remediate students to academic standard prior to taking first level courses required by Southeastern Louisiana University School of Nursing.

C. Other Degrees. Degrees from accredited schools and universities accepted by official transcript to Southeastern Louisiana University.

D. Year/Semester of Appeal. Year/semester of university study in which the student was actively enrolled at the time of the appeal. First semester is spring; second semester is summer; and third semester is fall. (1st year, 1-2-3 semester, 2nd year 1-2-3 semester, 3rd year, 1-2-3 semester, 4th year 1-2-3 semester, and 5th year 1-2-3 semester).

E. Reason for Appeal. Reason listed on the appeal form as academic or non-academic.

F. Pre-Nursing GPA on Required Courses. Individual grade point average (GPA) based on courses that are required and/or may be taken prior to admission into the Nursing School at Southeastern
Louisiana State University (General Catalogue, 1994-95).

G. Nursing GPA at Appeal. Individual grade point average (GPA) based on all nursing course grades at the time a student filed an appeal for progression at Southeastern Louisiana State University.

H. Nursing GPA at Graduation. Individual grade point average (GPA) cumulative based on all grades received while in the nursing program at Southeastern Louisiana State University.

I. Overall GPA at Graduation. Individual grade point average (GPA) based on all courses completed at Southeastern Louisiana State University and courses transferred to the university by official transcript.

5. Nursing Students. Individuals enrolled in a University School of Nursing under the guidelines of that university and the State Board of Nursing (General Catalogue 1994-95).

6. Predictors of Success. Identified factors that can be communicated to nursing students and nursing faculty to guide nursing students to academic progression.

7. Progression and Retention Committee. Committee of five individuals (four nursing faculty and one nursing
student) who are assigned the responsibility of reviewing all Academic Appeals in the Southeastern Louisiana University School of Nursing (General Catalogue 1994-95).

8. University Teaching Program. Approved and accredited program of higher education in the field of nursing designed to graduate individuals prepared for licensure as a Registered Nurse.
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Theoretical Framework

To establish a theoretical framework for the study, research regarding empowerment and subsequent categories of student empowerment have been addressed. Review of the literature in ERIC, CINAHL, MEDLINE, NTIS, GPO and Proquest, found no studies on the condition (demographics, status, success, failure, license or completion) of student nurses that were granted appeal and continued in the nursing programs.

Empowerment

Empowerment is a frequently used term, with each discipline having its own definition. Walker and Avant (1988) analyzed the term and adapted it to the concept of nursing education.

Empowerment in nursing education is a concept analysis of application to philosophy, learning and instruction. The Walker and Avant (1988) strategy is used to complete the concept analysis of empowerment. Empowerment is defined as the interpersonal process of providing the proper tools, resources and environment to build, develop and increase the ability and effectiveness of others to set and reach goals for individual and social ends (Walker & Avant, 1988). Empowerment occurs between two or more people: the person who empowers and the person who is empowered.
Empowerment is defined in *Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language* (Guralnik, 1970) as: "(1) to give power or authority to, authorize; (2) to give ability to, enable, permit. According to Chapman (1992), "... synonyms for empower include to give or confer power, invest, endue, endow, strengthen, arm and delegate" (p. 490). The suffix '-ment' is defined as: "(1) a result or product; (2) the act, fact, process or art" (Guralnik, 1970, p. 726). Thus, the word empowerment becomes a noun defined as the result or process of empowering.

Examining the words 'enable' and 'power' help to define empowerment. The word then means, "(1) to make able, provide with means, opportunity, power or authority and empowerment as professionalization" (Guralnik, 1970, p. 380).

Hawks (1992) introduced the Murrell-Armstrong Empowerment Matrix which provides the theoretical framework for this study. Journals such as *The American Journal of Nursing*, *Nurse Educator* and *Nursing Outlook* provide support for the defining attributes, antecedents and consequences of empowerment.

The six categories of empowering methods in the Murrell-Armstrong Empowerment Matrix - education, learning, mentoring/supporting, providing, structuring and actualizing are described in the matrix. Education is the sharing of information as well as helping others to learn
to use and create new information. Learning involves others in decision-making. Mentoring/supporting is the provision of support and guidance for others to help them achieve their goals by providing resources for success. Structuring includes promoting organizational arrangements that allow or limit activities. Finally, actualizing builds upon the previous methods and involves the individual and organization as the individual performs what he or she is best prepared to do at the highest level (Hawks, 1992; Vogt & Murrell, 1990). Although designed for organizational managers, the Murrell-Armstrong Empowerment Matrix has substantial usefulness for nursing education for two reasons. First, empowerment is an interactive process in the matrix. Second, the matrix's empowerment methods have implications for nursing education (Vogt & Murrell, 1990).

Empowerment, in the matrix, is viewed as an interactive process with two or more people. In nursing education, dyads exist between instructors and students and between students. Many classes are composed of small groups. Some classes, such as management courses, prepare beginning and advanced students to function in an organizational climate (i.e., hospitals, clinics, community settings, and college of nursing). Furthermore, a goal of education is to prepare persons to face a world of controversy: international, political and social as well as
personal (Rogers, 1983). Hence, settings addressed in the matrix are applicable to the educational setting.

Second, the six empowerment methods addressed by the matrix have implications for nursing education. Education goes beyond simple sharing information (Ellsworth, 1989). Leadership by a person in an empowering setting focuses on developing others, not on methods to control others. The leader involves others in goal-setting and decision-making processes. If educators motivate, energize, excite and liberate others to learn, everyone benefits. Mentoring also proves useful. A seasoned nursing instructor can mentor a student nurse. Nursing instructors can mentor or be supportive in helping the student develop as a professional nurse, and experienced practicing nursing can foster the success of recent graduates (Maeroff, 1988).

A conceptual map depicts relationships and demonstrates cases which serve to make the ideas more apparent. The concept of empowerment is applied to philosophy, learning and instruction. While pragmatism reflects the ideas presented on empowerment, both embrace individual and social goals. The student's role is an active one in the learning process. Learning is viewed as lifelong, using appropriate environment, tools, and resources for its' development (Zerwekh, 1990).

Kilkus (1993) researched the assertiveness of professional nurses as it is considered health behavior for
all people that when present, mitigates against personal powerlessness and results in personal empowerment. Age, gender, years of nursing experience, basic nursing education, clinical nursing speciality, type of employer, highest educational level and prior assertiveness training were all key components in the ability to develop assertive behavior and empowerment in the work field.

Kendia (1990), in his study of professional competencies, found that 90% of the nurses in the study ($n = 500$) believed in self and his or her personal abilities. However, Kilkus (1993) found nursing students, using the same independent variables, lacked the assertive power found in professional nurses. The level of nursing students at the time of the pilot study was not discussed. Kilkus concluded that that this assertive behavior would be positively skewed as the nursing students approach graduation.


Provision of resources is necessary for success in all student cases. Sometimes the teacher is a resource, but at other times referrals to other knowledgeable people and materials may be needed for the student. Although the educator may not be able to change organizational structures, the teacher can help the student acquire knowledge and skill needed to produce structural modifications (Bevis & Watson, 1989).

Boffman (1988), while researching the relationship of nurses' academic degree level to perceived expert power and influence among nurses, found that the relationship of self-actualization and expert power could only be found after the student had entered into the senior level. The associate degree nurses developed the perception much sooner than the diploma nurses or the baccalaureate nurses. The graduation date occurred sooner in the Associate and the Diploma Degree Programs than in the Baccalaureate Degree Program.

Loos and Maddox (1989) emphasized that Canadian Baccalaureate nursing students (n = 94) had a greater
feeling of professionalism and territoriality than Associate Degree nursing students \( (n = 70) \) and Diploma nursing students \( (n = 62) \). This study was done on a cross section of educational experiences and education levels. Loos and Maddox (1989) attempted to establish a link between professionalism and being empowered.

Lyle, Sawatsky, and Fowlew-Kerry (1992) researched the Post-RN Degree Programs and the curriculum. Students were encouraged to be assertive and to practice the use of empowerment in their studies. An increased productivity among Post-RN students was seen as the student reached a point of self-actualization within their profession. Post-RN curriculum and its development as well as its means of application may facilitate the premise that the second chance for study is effective in nursing students.

Finally, self-actualization of students is one goal of nursing education (Rogers, 1983). Guided experiences and support of nursing students may help achieve this goal. Students who are given a second chance after problems are identified may use self-actualization to progress in the nursing education process.

Progression and Retention

**Historical Perspective**

In 1900, Schools of Nursing were mainly located in the hospital setting. Nurses were given diplomas or certificates upon completion of a nursing program. Nurses
were seen as being subservient to doctors and were viewed as being unprofessional and as knowing their place. Student nurses were viewed as less than nurses with little or no rights (Kalisch & Kalisch, 1986). No appeal processes were encouraged or facilitated by nursing students (Trofino, 1989). No empowerment of nursing students in any aspect of their education was initiated because no one in nursing had been identified as having 'rights' (Sullivan & Decker, 1992).

**NLN Standards**

In 1909, the first Baccalaureate Nursing Program in the United States was begun in Connecticut. It was 40 years later when the first nursing student exercised the option to appeal. The appeal process was facilitated by the National League of Nursing (NLN). The NLN was chartered in 1950 as the accrediting board for schools of nursing to develop a standard to address student rights (Miller & Keane, 1972). The NLN is an organization concerned with the "improvement of nursing education, nursing service and the provision of health care in the United States" (Mosby, 1994, p. 1047). It acts as a testing service for nursing students and the accreditation of nursing programs as well as resource on information about health trends in nursing. The NLN has been successful in establishing a guide for faculty and students in their educational quest (Golden, 1982). The NLN's standards provide equity, justice and
The first appeal under the NLN Standard was filed in 1957. In this appeal case, the student was dismissed from nursing school because she was married. Even though this appeal was not granted and the student was not allowed to progress in the nursing program, the established policy was challenged. This hallmark appeal by a nursing student began other appeals in a variety of situations. In one such appeal case, a student nurse was dismissed for unprofessional behavior after she was found wearing a nurses cap outside of the clinical area (Golden, 1982). Other nursing students were dismissed after becoming pregnant while in nursing school (Holtz & Wilson, 1992). More student nurses were dismissed for not being the desired height or weight, (Vernon, 1979) and/or dismissed for not making a required grade to progress (Ray, 1981). These students all appealed but were denied progression.

Faculty-oriented courses and the faculty-directed curriculum were developed to ensure that the nursing student met the NLN standards. Many schools wrote their own
standards for the appeals process based on personal history and experiences (Woolley, 1977). However, these appeal processes for students who were dismissed were not uniform even with the NLN standards. Some schools posted appeal proceedings so student nurses could have time to prepare a defense while others have given no notice of the appeals process. The majority of nursing schools have provided an appeal or review policy for students. Nursing students were informed of the appeal procedure only as a procedure and not as a method to encourage students in need of appeal (Gibson, 1991).

The appeals process, being internal and controlled by the school of nursing, was not always uniform. Students choosing to appeal were told to follow certain criteria established by that particular school of nursing. Students were allowed to express themselves during the procedure. Documentation was the best defense for the instructor and the student. The use of documentation helped give organization to the appeals processes (McKinney, et al, 1988). Documentation began to be required in all appeals with justification for the appeal being strengthened in the process.

**ANA Standards**

American Nurses Association (ANA), was founded in 1896, ". . . to improve standards of health and the availability of health given in order to foster high
standards for nursing, to promote the professional development of nurses, and to advance the economic and general welfare of nurses" (Mosby, 1994, p. 74). In 1928, ANA incorporated into its legislative policy, specific references to the general welfare, health and education of nurses. The ANA currently meets biannually to evaluate changes in the scope of practice, monitor scientific and educational developments, encourage research, and develop statements regarding legislation affecting nursing practice.

Standards and Codes of Practice established by the ANA in the Standards of Nursing Practice (Nurse Practice Act, 1990) were seen as the acceptable guidelines for nurses' and students' rights in the 1980s in regard to the appeals process (Burrell, 1992). These criteria, when not met, were indicators that action was required and provided a set of guidelines to assist the student in continuing their practice with an appeal (Parrott, 1993).

**Legal Aspects of Appeals**

The ideas of nursing changed as schools of nursing opened appeal process options to students. Nursing began to grow and develop in a sense of being its own profession. Nursing students began to be more assertive and to exercise their options for appeals (Burrell, 1992). Nursing students developed a sense of autonomy. The justice system provided litigation in the courtroom, not the university. However,
the legal system soon began to be an identified source for students to debate problems with grades and/or instructors (Majorowicz, 1986). Nursing students were granted 'rights' with the passage of the 18th Amendment of the Constitution of the United States in 1933. Options for nursing students to challenge the school of nursing and its facility in court became reality (Pollock, 1983). Civil suits were filed as a direct result of appeals by nursing students who felt they had suffered damages or consequences from the nursing school or faculty member. Courts became more willing to hear certain types of academically-related issues (Robinson, 1979). The courts determined faculty to have three major obligations to the students: (1) proper instruction, (2) adequate supervision of both in and out of class activities that are instructively related, and (3) the maintenance of instructionally-related equipment in a reasonable state of repair (Owens, 1980).

In a landmark decision of 1961, Dixon vs. Alabama State Board of Education, the measure of quality of the universities' appeals procedure was tested and found to be inadequate to dismiss individuals for disciplinary misconduct (Murphy & Sanding, 1978). This court decision made it clear that the nursing school and the facility must provide equal application of the rules to all students. Universities and other educational institutions were found to take inadequate legal approaches to evidence or level of
proof in disciplinary proceedings and even fewer in academic areas (Spink, 1988).

Clinical grades, being part of the appeal process and also used for progression and retention criteria, were challenged (Thiele, Holloway, Murphy, Pendarvis, & Stucky, 1991). Students who were not successful in clinical areas or whose grades were not justified began to exercise the process for appeal under the 'Student Rights Act'. The nursing student now had a choice to file a civil suit as an alternative to failure or to file an appeal using the schools appeal process (Majorowicz, 1986).

Nursing faculty, knowing the baccalaureate nursing student must have the ability to make decisions accurately and precisely to continue in the nursing program, began looking into the process of nursing practice (Sullivan & Decker, 1992). Nursing faculty often must make decisions that will affect the nursing students' future. Nursing students have had no indicators that determine when or how nursing instructors make decisions (Thiele, et al, 1991). Nursing students and nursing instructors clearly understand that the courts have ordered that equal and clear criteria for Progression and Retention Policies must be established to guide the appeals process (Kalisch & Kalisch, 1986). Therefore, the process of developing a mechanism for adequate and equal appeals began.
Nursing Students Success

Second Chance

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (1986), in "Essentials of College and University Education for Professional Nursing", gave support to the notion that all nursing students do not progress or develop in nursing at the same time. They advocated the idea that some students require a second chance. The view of giving the student a second chance in nursing school was also very closely related to the views of resuscitation in life-threatening conditions. Nursing students, senior staff nurses and first-year nurses shared feelings about resuscitation (saving) of patients and the "Right to die with dignity". The staff realizing the increase in age of nursing students, indicated that some clients were 'not for resuscitation' and should not be 'saved' (Candy, 1991).

RNs working with students found that sometimes giving student nurses a second chance in nursing school only prolonged their failure (Josefowiltz, 1980). The RNs felt it wasted valuable resources that may be better applied to other nursing students. Nursing students did not agree with the RN and felt that sometimes other factors played key roles in nursing students requiring additional help and a second chance to be successful. Some of the reasons listed by nursing students for the need for additional support were: immaturity, lack of direction in study, poor
preparation, and the inability to set career priorities. Nursing students agreed that sometimes second chances in nursing education could help those at-risk students to become good nurses (Murphy & Sanding, 1978). Nursing instructors felt second chances may save good students. Nursing instructors, understanding the need for commitment to study and personal sacrifice, also indicated additional help may make the difference between success and failure (Murrell, 1985).

Senior staff nurses expressed concern that second chances in nursing school only delay the process of student failure (Brozenec, Marshall, Thomas, & Walsh, 1967). Senior staff nurses found if nursing students had problems as students then they generally had problems as nurses. Because life and death is an issue the senior staff nurses work with daily, they were very inflexible and chose not to give second chances (Giger & Davidbizor, 1990).

Beginning staff nurses view the second chance positively if the student nurse is successful and does not fail again (Niedringhaus & O'Driscoll, 1983). The beginning staff nurses viewed the topic as an economic one. The job market for nurses is not as open as it once was, and many nurses have had difficulties finding a job after they finish their studies (Vogel, 1994). Beginning staff nurses, students and faculty agreed to work together to assure success but were unable to agree on how many chances should
be given to achieve that success (Kanter, 1977). The problem of how and when second chances should be given remains an issue with all nurses as well as nursing educators (Zerwekh, 1990).

Predictors of Success

Trends in current economic constraints in colleges and universities have provided an environment in which the ability to predict which students will be successful and go on to graduate is important (Muhlenkamp, 1971). Research studies by Puetz (1988), Walker and Avant (1988), Bevis and Murray (1990), Mazhindu (1990), Akers (1992), and Hawks (1992) have been done to better understand nursing students and the education process. However, this researcher could not find any studies in the literature involving an appeal process for progression and retention that addressed predictors for students based on those individuals who have appealed to the Progression and Retention Committee for special consideration to progress.

Academic Predictors

Grade Point Average (GPA) is the one leading predictor for success among nursing students who graduate. However, overall academic achievement has been found to be the greatest influence on the GPA (Glick, McClelland, & Yang, 1986).

Four-hundred-seven graduates from a baccalaureate nursing program in 1984-1987 were studied to determine if
predictors for success could be identified. GPA in lower division, science GPA, type of lower division college, age, and sex were studied. The findings indicated that if enrichment courses and support programs were introduced on the junior level, then the students had greater success and demonstrated higher GPAs before graduation (Jenks, J., Selekman, J., Boss, T., & Paquet, M., 1989).

Diez (1989) presented his findings concerning typical nursing students in a paper entitled *Teachers Empowerment: Expanding the Notion of 'Knowledge Base*', at the Annual Meeting of the Association of Independent Colleges for Teachers Education. He supported the idea that the nursing grade-point average and the overall grade-point average can be strong predictors determining nursing students' progression and/or retention in universities. Wall, Miller, & Widerquist, (1993) reaffirmed earlier findings that nursing students having grade point averages of 2.7 on a 4.0 point academic scale are predicted to have success in completing the degree program. The grade point average of 2.5 on a 4 point academic scale is a predictor for success in passing licensure requirements of the State Board of Nursing in Louisiana (Woolley, 1977).

Predictors for success have been established through research in three domains of learning: cognitive, psychomotor and affective. Students identified with problem learning in one of these domains have been found to have
difficulty in meeting the established criteria of the university programs for nurses (Froman & Owen, 1989). When additional opportunities were given to nursing students to meet established criteria, two questions emerged. These questions were: "When is it enough?" and "When is it too much?" (Brozenec, Marshall, Thomas, & Walsh, 1967). Scores on the Nurse Entrance Test (NET), used as early predictors for academic success of students, showed a need for academic support (Mueller & Lymann, 1969). The reading comprehension, math, and composite scores and nursing student grades can be accurate in predicating completion of the nursing program graduation and passing the licensure examination (Abudur-Rahman, Femea, & Gaines, 1994).

The most obvious characteristic interfering with success in health occupation programs is inadequate basic skills. Successful support programs recognize the need for the development of cognitive skills (Pinter, 1983).

Traditionally, nursing schools have used courses in chemistry and physics to eliminate the weaker student. Identifying nursing students who do not pass chemistry and physics has been one way of eliminating potentially weak students (Caon & Treagust, 1993). However, nursing students do not view the science or math courses as important or relevant to nursing study (Holtz & Wilson, 1992). Science and math courses are offered to nursing students while they are active in the process of nursing courses. The science
courses were seen as a hard science and technical to nursing. Nursing students often prefer personal and caring courses. Many nursing students have predetermined attitudes and feelings about science and math courses and do not do well in these courses (Caon & Treagust, 1993).

Research by Akers (1992), using background variables of age, gender, ethnic origin, ACT composite scores and previous degrees earned, indicated beginning nursing students have been slower in reading skills (tenth grade level). Non-traditional nursing students have been able to catch up with grades and even master science courses once the problem of remedial education for preparation was instituted (Holtz & Wilson, 1992).

The ability to test well on challenge examinations is related to the level of anxiety of the student (Perez, 1977). Students with increased anxiety levels were found to be less likely to do well on challenge examinations. Students with increased coping ability had higher scores on the challenge examinations (Rukholm & Viverals, 1993).

Students identified as disadvantaged due to race, educational background, or cultural background have often been unsuccessful in higher education courses (Holtz & Wilson, 1992). Disadvantaged students in programs designed to assist the student academically can make a significant difference in the successful completion of the program of
nursing and passing of the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) (Holtz & Wilson, 1992).

The National Council Licensure Examination for registered nurses (NCLEX) was first administered in July 1982 and has been administered twice yearly since (Sanders, Loquist, & Holmes, 1983). The NCLEX is a better predictive factor for students who are planning to take the State Board Examination than the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or the American College Test (ACT). However, Grade Point Average (GPA) is still the strongest predictor (Froman & Owen, 1989).

NCLEX was used to attempt to identify predictors that may indicate a pass or fail on the State Board Examination Test for licensure. The students' GPA continues to be the major predictor for students who have problems. The NCLEX also can help problems be identified in a baccalaureate program as early as the second semester. Students may be helped and may pass the NCLEX when special assistance is applied to their needs (Payne & Duffey, 1986).

The Nurse Practice Act of 1990 (P.L.37-911) regulates the practice of nursing and education in each state. It is designed to protect the public. Safety and competency of the student nurse is a key issue and is often the main factor used in the grading system (Parrott, 1993).

A higher number of nursing students are dismissed from tax-supported postsecondary institutions than private
universities. In both settings, students are dismissed for two reasons: (1) academic failure and (2) disciplinary actions. These may vary in frequency but not as significantly as one may suspect (Golden, 1982). Neither tax-supported nor private universities have had programs that address second chance needs of nursing students (Candy, 1991).

Formal data collection may be a leading source of identifying predictors for students in progression. Formal and informal meetings or conversations should be documented to help student and faculty for future reference (Stuart, 1986).

**Demographic Predictors**

**Age.** Haggerty (1990) found that students in age groups over thirty have higher success in nursing courses and go on to graduate and pass the State Board Examination. According to Holland (1990), the predictor of age used as a variable of work role, professional support, and role conflict explained 4% of the variance in professional role transition, 4% in role conflict, and 3% in professional support. Nursing students in the age group of 30 years or more had fewer problems with academics and adjustment to situations in the nursing education classroom (Holland, 1990).

Hauri (1989) found age, as related to years of experience prior to nursing school, to be a successful
predictor for completion and graduation. Age in numerical years did not indicate success among graduates (n = 130) but numerical years directed toward experience in nursing did indicate success.

**Marital Status.** Marital status of baccalaureate reentry nursing students was investigated by Grendell (1991). No significant difference was found between married and non-married students in terms of graduation success. Grendell's (1991) role transition and role conflict research did not indicate nursing students who were married were able to adapt to student life easier nor were they more successful in graduating from nursing programs.

**Gender.** Characteristics of both male and female Australian nursing students were analyzed by Neill and Barclay (1989). ' Typical' students were identified as young females from privileged socioeconomic backgrounds who had recently graduated from high school and who had chosen nursing primarily for reasons of personal satisfaction. Furthermore, a direct correlation was found with American nursing students who were also viewed as being young, Anglo females who had recently graduated. Less than one percent of nursing students were male at the time of the study (Neill and Barclay, 1989).

Schrock (1992) found a relationship between male advancement in career situations and higher income. Of
nurses studied (n = 250, male n = 75, female n = 175) in a large western university, more women listed family and home as being the main reason for them not seeking advancement in their career. Men nursing students listed higher income and career success as goals related to home and family.

**Race.** Giger and Davidbizon (1990) indicated that nursing students in the United States were predominately Anglo-American. Nurses were surveyed in an investigation of conceptual and theoretical approaches to patient care in the Baccalaureate degree (n = 1009) and Associate degree (n = 1015) programs. Findings revealed that 92% of the Baccalaureate degree nursing students and 94% of the Associate degree nursing students were Anglo-American. Of those students studied, 67% were predicted to graduate from the nursing program. Less than 5% of those graduating from nursing school were not Anglo-American.

**Residence.** Schutzenhofer's (1994) identification of residence role relationships (whether students were from rural, urban or metropolitan settings) could strengthen professional nursing development. Those nurses who lived in rural (n = 50) and urban (n = 50) areas had a significant number of predictors relating to success: age, gender (female), and high school graduating grade point average. Of those living in the city (n = 50) or metropolitan (n = 50) areas, fewer number of success predictors (i.e. work experience and ACT scores) were found. There were no
significant findings (p > .05) that indicated a relationship between the differences in residence and success.

**ACT Scores.** Akers (1992) studied the relationship between nursing student ACT scores, completion of the nursing program and success on the National Council Licensure Examination. Those students who scored in the upper one-third of the composite ACT Scores were found to have 100% success on the National Council Licensure Examination. Not all of the nursing students who scored in the upper third percent on the Act scores were successful in nursing programs and graduated. Only 70% of the upper one-third of the ACT scores graduated to take the examination.

**Remediation.** Remedial courses were investigated in Gieske's (1990) research study to determine if relationships between remedial courses and demographic variables could predict successful completion of the nursing program at the master's level. The remedial courses had been introduced before the baccalaureate educational program began. Remedial courses proved to be affective with 53% (n = 34) of the individuals studied. No significant relationship could be established between the remedial courses and the success of master's level nursing students. This may have been due to the effect of the baccalaureate program.
**Other Degrees.** Winson (1995) investigated the academic and the demographic predictors for success between baccalaureate degree and diploma certificate nursing students. She found no significant differences between the demographics studied and the dependent variable. However, the variable of other degrees prior to nursing school was significant and was often the most predominate predictor of success.

**Pre-Nursing GPA on Required Courses.** Kendia (1990), in studying competencies in the Associate degree nursing student and the Baccalaureate degree nursing student, found that predictors for success were higher among students who had Pre-Nursing GPA's of 2.9 and above. Direct care, communication, and management were higher predictors of success with baccalaureate nursing students. Process of information and treatment during direct care was a higher predictor of success with the associate degree nursing students. More pre-nursing courses are required for baccalaureate nursing students and this may be one of the variables that produced the higher significant numbers (Backman & Steindler, 1971).

**Overall GPA.** Maeroff (1988) in a longitudinal research study found that the overall GPA had no significant relationship with the professional competence or the changes in the nursing students' self-esteem. However, the overall GPA was a predictor for the completion
by graduation of the nursing program. Overall GPA was significant in the pass rate of the State Board Examination after graduation and proved throughout the study to be the one most consistent with all nursing students studied ($n = 450$).

**Clinical Settings.** Students who are found to be unsafe in the care of patients in the clinical setting may be dismissed academically. Dismissal decisions are supported by those in hospital settings and in college settings because of the life threatening nature of nursing (Orth, Wilkinson, & Benfori, 1990). Predictors for the dismissal of students have not been determined but are related to safety issues and cannot be quantitatively applied to the clinical practice setting (Nash, Moore, & Andes, 1981).

**Evaluation of Students in the Classrooms and Clinical Areas**

Evaluation is one of the best ongoing ways to determine if students are accomplishing course objectives (Burrell, 1992). Evaluation by faculty determines if goals for students in the classroom and in the clinical practice areas are being met. Strengths and weakness can be determined by simple evaluation methods (Thorndyke, 1931). The needed support for weaker areas can be initiated to aid in the success of faculty and students.

Faculty evaluation of student progress may be a strong indication for success. The student-faculty relationship
can support the evaluation process (Pollock, 1983). Ethnic minority faculty role modeling can serve as a vital function in student retention (Holtz & Wilson, 1992).

Clinical performance can be measured by using a tool that allows documentation of expected and accomplished tasks (Stainton, 1983). Clinical practice areas are very difficult places for evaluation (Dewey, 1916). The clinical faculty and the student must work together to overcome the new students' clumsy psychomotor skills and awkward interpersonal skills (Dewey, 1925). Often the suggestions made by the instructor are direct and seen by the student as negation corrections. Faculty must deal with the student and the person to provide support (Dewey, 1960). The evaluation process has been effective if the student can physically and mentally provide patient care safely and efficiently (Seanson, 1973). "Personality conflict" that is unresolved may lead to poor evaluations and failure. It is recommended that at least two faculty at two different times evaluate a student before he or she fails (Copp, 1989). The second chance, in this case, may indicate a more objective evaluation (deTornyay, 1985).

Faculty, administrators, and students may all benefit in communication skills and in output if the faculty evaluations could be shared (Wallerstein & Bernstein, 1988). Faculty format and teaching skills are improved when the faculty evaluations are shared (Calagero, 1983).
Classroom performance of faculty have an impact on students' attitude toward learning and their ability to learn. Student evaluation of the faculty with positive evaluation outcome have been correlated directly to the students' progression and abilities to successfully 'problem solve' (Colson-Calagero, 1988).

Summary of Literature Review

Students who are weak academically can be identified by predictors of success. These students may be empowered by the use of Murrell-Armstrong's Six Categories of Empowerment: (1) education, (2) learning, (3) mentoring, (4) providing, (5) structuring, and (6) actualization. Through use of this matrix, students may be encouraged in their quest for success.

Findings in the literature identify areas of education where empowerment is most effective for nursing students. Predictors for success exist that allows students to progress to graduation and pass state board examinations. There are no indications whether the nursing student who has problems and who asks to continue in their studies could do so without the practice of empowerment.

The following factors were found to be effective in predicting success of nursing students who have not filed appeals for progression: grade point average of 2.5 or greater or 2.7 or greater in pre-nursing courses (Glick, McClelland, & Yang, 1986), GPA in chemistry and physics 2.5
or above, before nursing courses (Jenks, Selekmann, Boss, & Paquet, 1989), remedial classes prior to nursing courses (Akers, 1992), ACT scores (Forman & Owen, 1989), NCLEX scores (Payne & Duffey, 1986), and SAT scores (Forman & Owen, 1989). However an extensive literature review was unable to establish any composite information with nursing students who had filed appeals for progression.

The following demographic characteristics were also used as success predictors of nursing students who have not filed appeals for progression: age over 30 years (Haggerty, 1990), marital status when married at time of nursing school (Grendell, 1991), gender when female (Neill & Borclay, 1989), race when Anglo-American (Giger & Davidbizor, 1990), and residence when related to other demographics, rural or urban: age, female, high school grade point average and city or metropolitan: work experience and ACT scores (Schutzenhofer, 1994). Again, no literature was found identifying predictors of success for students who had filed appeals.

Other degrees were found to be significant as predictors for success among Baccalaureate Degree and Diploma Certificate nursing students (Winson, 1995) who had never filed appeals for progression.

The overall evaluation process of clinical settings for instructors and students were found to be areas where life threatening consequences could result. Dismissal for
academic reasons were not quantitatively adapted to the success predictors studied by Nash, More and Andes (1981).

Evaluation of students in clinical areas when documentation is completed on objective measures were also studied for success predictors of nursing students who had never appealed. Stainton (1983) found that this is an effective means of predicating success and stressed the same views as had been earlier defined by Dewey (1916, 1925, & 1960). 'Documentation is the Key' to evaluation as a predictor for success.

Many predictors have been found to be successful for nursing students who have not filed an appeal for progression, but no studies of factors used as predictors for success of nursing students who have filed an appeal for progression were found. Perhaps this study of students who have filed an appeal and continued in nursing programs may enhance students' opportunity for success while adding to the body of knowledge.
CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

This section of the dissertation includes information regarding the setting, the population, the procedure, the instrumentation, the data collection procedure, and the data analysis. This was a descriptive ex post facto study.

Setting

Southeastern Louisiana University School of Nursing is a four year baccalaureate degree program. Students entering the sophomore year with a grade point average of 2.7 on a 4.0 point scale and meeting specific course requirements become eligible for admission to the nursing program. Students must have either completed, or be concurrently enrolled in, the adjunct nursing courses. These courses consist of an introductory nursing course, chemistry, anatomy and physiology, sociology, and psychology. Some students may have completed the second anatomy and physiology, microbiology, nutrition and diet therapy, and a pharmacology course. Yet others may take these courses with the beginning clinical nursing course. Transfer students are expected to be in compliance with the applicable policies related to equivalent course work and admission criteria required by the Admission Office at Southeastern Louisiana University (General Catalogue, 1994-95, pp 49-51, 233-240).
SLU Progression Procedure and Retention

Selective Progression and Retention in the School of Nursing

Recognizing nursing responsibility to safeguard patient care, the nursing profession has outlined detailed procedures for ensuring quality students and therefore, future professionals. According to the 1994-1995 General Catalogue, "The School of Nursing of Southeastern Louisiana University reserves the right to recruit, admit, and retain only those students who demonstrate evidence of being academically, physically, mentally, and emotionally capable of performing safe acts of nursing in a professional manner" (p 235).

The School of Nursing will permit only those students who have been formally accepted for progression in the Nursing program to register for required courses in Nursing other than Nursing 102 (Perspectives in Nursing). Students are required to submit an application for progression in the School of Nursing before enrolling in Nursing 208 (Concepts Basic to Nursing). This application must be favorably acted upon by the Committee on Selective Progression and Retention in the School of Nursing and by the Dean of the School of Nursing before a student is permitted to enroll in the professional nursing courses. The number of students selected for progression each semester
will vary according to the resources available to the School of Nursing (General Catalogue, 1994-95, p. 239).

**Progression Procedures and Policy**

Students are required to submit an application for progression in the School of Nursing before enrolling in Nursing 208 (Introduction to Clinical Nursing). The schedule for applying for progression, according to the General Catalogue, 1994-95, is as follows:

A. The application for Progression must be on file in the office of the Director, Hammond Campus School of Nursing, by May 15 in the Spring Semester to enroll in the Fall Semester, and by October 15 in the Fall Semester to enroll in the Spring Semester.

B. All applications for progression will be processed by the Committee on Selective Progression and Retention in the School of Nursing. The Committee will retain the individual applications for one calendar year.

C. All students in the School of Nursing must be formally accepted before enrolling in any required nursing course other than Nursing 102.

D. Students who make proper application will be considered for progression using the following criteria:
1. Overall GPA of 2.7 or better on 4.0 scale.
2. Evidence of health compatible with curriculum requirements.
3. Grade of "C" or better in all courses required at freshman level.

E. A history and physical examination will be required prior to taking the first clinical course (Nursing 208) and must be submitted four weeks prior to the semester students enter the course. This would be checked by the Level Coordinator and any problems referred to the Progression and Retention Committee. The School of Nursing reserves the right to investigate situations which may affect the student's ability to function. In addition, a physician's release may be required.

F. Students who have health conditions that may prevent their meeting the objectives of the program or a course in the program or that may cause potential injury to that student or to the clients for whom they care, will be required to have a personal interview with the Progression and Retention Committee members and either the Department Head or Dean.

G. Drug testing will be required.
H. Students who hold or have held licensure in any health care discipline and who have or have had disciplinary action against such license, and/or students who have or have had felony convictions, shall petition the Louisiana State Board of Nursing for review and action regarding their right to practice as students of nursing in Louisiana prior to entry into the first clinical course (General Catalogue, 1994-95, p. 239).

Students in the School of Nursing are required to submit evidence of a health examination, using the forms furnished by the School of Nursing, upon enrollment in Nursing 208 and every twelve (12) months thereafter. Students in clinical nursing courses are further required to submit evidence of annual certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (Course C). Any student not complying will be withdrawn from nursing laboratory courses. A personal interview may be required.

Retention Procedures and Policy

A. After students have been accepted for progression in the SLU School of Nursing, students must maintain an overall GPA of 2.0 or better, a 2.0 in the major and achieve a "C" or better in each required nursing course. When a student falls below a 2.0 average in the Nursing major, he/she will be permitted two (2) semesters in which to
achieve the required minimum 2.0 GPA in nursing courses. Failure to do so within the two semesters will require withdrawal from the School of Nursing. Any student who drops below a 2.0 in the overall grade point average will not be allowed to progress in nursing courses until a 2.0 overall is achieved.

B. Students will be permitted to enroll in any nursing course only twice.

C. Students will be permitted to repeat only two nursing courses.

D. Students must pass both theory and laboratory components of each nursing course to progress. Failure in either the clinical or the theory component of a nursing course will result in failure for the entire course. Nursing clinical laboratory experience is evaluated on a Pass/Fail basis.

E. Students who fail a Level II clinical nursing course may not progress to the other clinical nursing course without first successfully completing the one they failed (General Catalogue, 1994-95. p. 240).

The Committee on Selective Progression and Retention of the School of Nursing will review the status of
students, make recommendations to the Dean of the School of Nursing, and take proper action on matters as indicated:

A. When faculty members request the Committee to review the continued eligibility of a student.

B. When the grades of a student warrant such a review (failing grades, University appeals, etc.).

C. When faculty members report that the behavior of a student in the School of Nursing indicates a need for review (General Catalogue, 1994-95, pp. 234, 239 - 240).

Functions at SLU

Universities understanding the meaning of sound policies began establishing policies which would ensure that all students were treated fairly and equally. Universities began to publish the Progression and Retention Policies, Rules, and Regulations in the catalogue. The students were given access to the Progression and Retention policy for appeal upon admission to the School of Nursing and/or University. Each student was assured under the appeals policy that no harm or adverse effects would come against them if they exercised their right to appeal (General Catalogue, 1994-95).

Population

The target population was all nursing students who were eligible for appeals from 1988 through May, 1995. The
population-sample comprised 4,875 students who were enrolled in the Southeastern Louisiana University School of Nursing from January, 1988, to May, 1995. Of these 4,875 students, all of whom were eligible to appeal, 302 students appealed and became the accessible population for this study. The frame for the population-sample for this study was established through the historical files (Records Office and committee minutes) of the Progression and Retention Committee at Southeastern State University. The years 1988 through May, 1995 were used because it was then that structural changes regarding the appeals process were implemented by the Southeastern Louisiana University School of Nursing Progression and Retention Committee.

**Procedures**

The researcher obtained permission from school officials (CUHARS-201-H) to access the population-sample (students) records (see Appendix A). The lists and records of those nursing students who made an appeal to the Progression and Retention Committee from January, 1988 to May, 1995, were reviewed to obtain demographic and academic data. In addition, the information regarding the reasons that the 302 students gave for their appeal to the SLU Progression and Retention Committee were obtained from the files of that committee. Where students had made more than one appeal, only their initial demographic and academic data was used. Those students who were still in the
program, but out of sequence, were excluded from this study (not included in the population-sample) because the data were incomplete. Also, nursing students who were currently repeating nursing courses and those who had appealed before 1988 were excluded from the study because of changes in both the Nursing School Curriculum and the procedure for the appeals process at that time.

Nursing students who were identified as having progression problems were divided into two categories for reason of appeal: (1) academic ($n = 283$), and (2) non-academic ($n = 19$). For the purpose of this study, emphasis was placed on academic factors.

**Instrumentation**

The tool used in the study was a researcher designed recording form which listed the following variables: demographic - age, marital status, gender, race, residence; and academic - ACT scores, remediation, other degrees, year/semester of appeal (level of student when appealed), reason for appeal, pre-nursing GPA on required courses, nursing GPA at appeal (identified by year/semester), nursing GPA at graduation, and overall GPA at graduation. Other items included in the instrument were student record number, date of admission to the nursing program, state board examination results and appeal status. In cases where a student had appealed more than once, the information was listed separately but only initial information was recorded
for analysis. The coded instrument was constructed so that confidentiality of individual student records could be maintained. A copy of the data collection instrument can be found in Appendix B.

Data Collection Procedure

Permission to conduct this study was obtained from the committee for Use of Humans and Animals in Research at Southeastern Louisiana University (see Appendix C). The files of nursing students were obtained and the personal characteristics, individual course grades, and cumulative grade point average at completion or program exit were recorded on the instrument in a manner to maintain confidentiality. For students whose records were incomplete in the School of Nursing Office, the Research Instrumentation Records Office was asked to provide the appropriate information. ACT scores were secured from the computer records of the university. Minutes of the Progression and Retention Committee were obtained from the committee chair. All information was recorded on the data collection instrument in a manner to maintain confidentiality.

Data Analysis

An a'priori alpha level of .05 was utilized. The procedure for statistical analysis of the data by objective was as follows:
1. Describe, using demographic and academic data, the accessible population of nursing students who graduated following successful appeal or did not graduate (following successful or non-successful appeal) from the nursing program at Southeastern Louisiana University. This analysis was achieved by measuring the demographic variables and the academic background variables for each of the following groups of students: students with appeals granted who graduated ($n = 250$); students with appeals granted who did not graduate ($n = 12$), and students with appeals denied who did not graduate ($n = 40$). The demographic variables were: age, marital status, gender, race, and residence (by parish). The academic variables were: ACT scores, remediation, other degrees, year/semester of appeal, reason for appeal, pre-nursing GPA on required courses, GPA at appeal, nursing GPA at graduation and overall GPA at graduation. Means and standard deviations were computed for the continuous variables (age, ACT scores, pre-nursing GPA on required courses, nursing GPA at appeal, nursing GPA at graduation and overall GPA at graduation), and frequencies were computed for categorical variables (marital status, gender, race, residence, remediation, other degrees, year/semester of appeal, reason for appeal).
2. Compare those nursing students who successfully appealed and graduated (n = 250) to those who successfully appealed but did not graduate (n = 12) using independent continuous and categorical variables. The dependent variable was graduating from the nursing program. The continuous independent variables were age, ACT, pre-nursing GPA on required courses, nursing GPA at appeal, nursing GPA at graduation and overall GPA at graduation. The categorical independent variables were marital status, gender, race, residence, remediation, other degrees, year/semester of appeal, and reason for appeal. If the independent variable was continuous a t-test analysis was employed to see if there were significant differences between group means. If the independent variable was categorical a Chi-Square procedure was employed to see if there was significant differences between observed frequency data and expected frequencies.

3. Determine if demographic and academic predictors of success exist for nursing students who have appealed for progression, and if significant predictors of success are found, describe the prediction model. This was accomplished using discriminant analysis, a statistical procedure designed to identify significant predictor variables and classify students into
distinct groupings (i.e. predicted to graduate or not graduate).
CHAPTER 4
FINDINGS

The purpose of this descriptive research study was to determine if predictors for success among nursing students exist after they are granted appeals by the Southeastern Louisiana University Progression and Retention Committee. Using a researcher designed instrument, demographic and academic data were recorded. Using frequencies, t-tests, Chi-squares and discriminant analysis, the information was analyzed for presentation. Chapter four will include discussion of the students' graduation status and the findings by objective.

Appeals Status

Of the 4,875 students who were in the nursing program and eligible for an appeal, 302 students filed a first time appeal process request from January, 1988, to May, 1995. A total of 262 (86.8%) nursing students were successful in the appeals process and 40 (13.2%) were not successful.

When the nursing students' data were examined by year of appeal, the greatest number of appeals was found to have been requested in 1993 (26.8%). The year with the fewest students appealing was 1989 with only eight appeals requested (2.7%). The students' appeals by year were examined for the proportion of appeals granted and denied within each year. The years during which the greatest percentage (100%) of student appeals were granted were 1988
and 1991. The smallest proportion of students' appeals granted was in 1990 (66.7%). In both years in which 100% of the students' appeals were granted, the relative number of appeals requested was small. This information is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Frequency of Students Appealing for Progression by Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Granted</th>
<th>Denied</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%a</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
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<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>66.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>86.8</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a Percentage of appeals granted within the specified academic year. *b Percentage of appeals denied within the specified academic year. *c Percentage of total number of appeals requested.

Objective I

The first objective of the study was to describe, using demographic and academic data, the accessible
population of nursing students (n = 302). This analysis was achieved by measuring the demographic variables and the academic background variables for each of the following groups of students: students with appeals granted, who graduated (n = 250); students with appeals granted, who did not graduate (n = 12), and students with appeals denied, who did not graduate (n = 40). The demographic variables were: age, marital status, gender, race and residence. The academic variables were: ACT scores, remediation, other degrees, year/semester of appeal, reason for appeal, pre-nursing GPA on required courses, nursing GPA at appeal, nursing GPA at graduation, and overall GPA at graduation. Frequencies and percentages were calculated for categorical data from those students who graduated or who did not graduate. Means and standard deviations were determined for continuous data from the same groups of students.

**Age**

The age of nursing students at time of appeal ranged from 20 years to 41 years with a mean age of 26.6 years. The standard deviation (SD) was 5.03 years. Forty-four percent of the students who appealed were between 20 and 24 years of age. By group, the largest proportion of students to graduate was in the age group 35 - 41 years (89.8%). This information is found in Table 2.
Table 2  
Frequency of Students' Appeal and Graduation Status by Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>GRANTED</th>
<th>APPEAL STATUS</th>
<th>DENIED</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graduated</td>
<td>Not Granted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>82.1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>81.6</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>28.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>80.9</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-41</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>89.8</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>82.8</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Age recorded at time of appeal; M = 26.6, SD = 5.03.  
*a*Percentage of successfully appealing students graduated within the specified age ranges.  
*b*Percentage of successfully appealing students not graduated within the specified age ranges.  
*c*Percentage of unsuccessful appealing students within the specified age range.  
*d*Percentage of total number of appealing students.
Marital status

Concerning the marital status of the 302 students, 89 (29.5%) of the students were married, 55 (18.2%) of the students were divorced, 147 (48.7%) of the students were single, and 11 (3.6%) of the students were widowed. Approximately one-half (48.7%) of the students filing appeals were single and 118 (80.3%) of them went on to graduate. Less than one-third (29.5%) of the students appealing were married while the remaining students were divorced (n = 55) and widowed (n = 11). The students who had the largest percentage to graduate were divorced (92.8%). This information is presented in Table 3.

Gender

Gender of the 302 nursing students was 287 (95.0%) females and 15 (5.0%) males. These figures represent the average proportions of female students and male students in nursing programs nationally (Mozzocco, 1988). By group, 237 (82.6%) of the females had their appeals granted and graduated, 11 (3.8%) of them had their appeals granted but did not graduate and 39 (13.6) of them had their appeals denied. Of the male students, 13 (86.7%) had their appeals granted and graduated, while one (6.7%) had his appeal granted but did not graduate and one (6.7%) had his appeal denied. This information is presented in Table 4.
Table 3

Frequency of Students' Appeal and Graduation Status by Marital Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>APPEAL STATUS</th>
<th>GRANTED</th>
<th>DENIED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Graduated</td>
<td>Not Graduated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( \bar{a} )</td>
<td>( \bar{a}^b )</td>
<td>( \bar{a}^c )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.60</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18.20</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>82.80</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>13.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( ^a \) Percentage of successfully appealing students graduated within the specified marital. \( ^b \) Percentage of successfully appealing students not graduated within the specified marital status. \( ^c \) Percentage of unsuccessfully appealing students within the specified marital. \( ^d \) Percentage of total number of appealing students.
Table 4

Frequency of Students' Appeal and Graduation Status by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>APPEAL STATUS</th>
<th>GRANTED</th>
<th>Not Graduated</th>
<th>DENIED</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>237</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a%</td>
<td>82.6</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>95.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b%</td>
<td>86.6</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td>250</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c%</td>
<td>82.8</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Percentage of successfully appealing students graduated within the specified gender.  b Percentage of successfully appealing students not graduated within the specified gender.  c Percentage of unsuccessfully appealing students within the specified gender.  d Percentage of total number of appealing students.

Race

Race was designated by black (n = 3), white (n = 296) and other (n = 3). By racial group, 245 (82.8%) of the white students had their appeals granted and graduated, 12 (4.0%) of them had their appeals granted and did not graduate and 39 (13.2%) of them had their appeals denied. Three (100.0%) of the black students had their appeals granted and graduated. Two (66.7%) of the other
race students had their appeals granted and graduated, none of them had their appeals granted and did not graduate, and only one (33.3%) of them had their appeal denied. This information is presented in Table 5.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>GRANTED Graduated</th>
<th>GRANTED Not Graduated</th>
<th>DENIED</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>82.8</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>98.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>82.8</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a* Percentage of successfully appealing students graduated within the specified race.  
*b* Percentage of successfully appealing students not graduated within the specified race.  
*c* Percentage of unsuccessfully appealing students within the specified race.  
*d* Percentage of total number of appealing students.


Residence

Residence refers to the home parish listed at the time of the appeal. Fifteen parishes were listed with the least number of students residing in a parish being three (1.0%) and the most residing in a parish being 89 (29.5%). Of the 15 parishes, East Feliciana and West Baton Rouge had three (1.0%) students each. One-third (n = 89) of the students who appealed were from East Baton Rouge Parish while only 23 (7.6%) of the students were from Tangipahoa Parish, where the university is located. Five of the fifteen parishes (East Feliciana, West Feliciana, Ascension, Livingston, and Pointe Coupee) had a 100% graduation rate. This information is found in Table 6.

ACT Scores

The ACT services revised the criteria for reporting scores in October, 1989. Some of the students appealing took the ACT before the revision and some students appealing took the ACT after the revision. However, a conversion table to enhance the ACT score was applied to the scores prior to 1989 by the university to insure the consistency of the ACT scores presented.

The mean ACT scores for students appealing were as follows: ACT Math = 19.7, ACT Science = 20.2, ACT English = 20.5 and ACT Composite = 20.1. This data is in Table 7.
Table 6
Frequency of Students' Appeal and Graduation Status by Residence Parish

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residence Parish</th>
<th>GRANTED</th>
<th>Not Graduated</th>
<th>DENIED</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baton Rouge</td>
<td>78.6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>29.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>87.0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>88.2</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tangipahoa</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>78.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Helena</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>88.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoyelles</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orleans</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Tammany</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumption</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(table cont'd.)
### APPEAL STATUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residence Parish</th>
<th>GRANTED</th>
<th>DENIED</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graduated</td>
<td>Not Graduated</td>
<td>Graduated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pointe Coupee</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livingston</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ascension</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Feliciana</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Feliciana</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Baton Rouge</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>250</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^aPercentage of successfully appealing students graduated within the specified residence parish. ^bPercentage of successfully appealing students not graduated within the specified residence parish. ^cPercentage of unsuccessfully appealing students within the specified residence parish. ^dPercentage of total number of appealing students.
Table 7

Mean ACT Scores by Students' Appeal and Graduation Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACT Scores</th>
<th>APPEAL STATUS</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graduated</td>
<td>Not Graduated</td>
<td>Denied</td>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT Math</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>3.421</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>3.059</td>
<td>19.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT Science</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>2.572</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>3.409</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT English</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>2.270</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>2.422</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT Composite</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>1.814</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>1.997</td>
<td>20.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>1.138</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Appeal granted, Graduated group n = 250, Appeal granted, Not graduated group n = 12, Appeal denied, Not graduated group n = 40, Total n = 302. Range of ACT scores: ACT Math, 10 to 29; ACT Science, 10 to 28; ACT English, 2 to 27; and ACT Composite, 14 to 24.

"Mean ACT scores of successfully appealing students who graduated. "Mean ACT scores of successfully appealing students who did not graduate. "Mean ACT scores of unsuccessfully appealing students. "Mean ACT scores of total number of appealing students.
Remediation

Remediation was required for students who did not meet academic standards prior to taking the first level courses required by Southeastern Louisiana University School of Nursing. Remedial courses included pre-nursing courses in science, math and/or English.

Of the 302 students appealing, 51 (16.9%) students had taken remedial courses before entering nursing school while 251 (83.1%) had not. Of the 51 students taking remedial courses, 38 (74.5%) had their appeal granted and graduated, 4 (7.8%) had their appeal granted and did not graduate and 9 (17.7%) had their appeal denied. Of the 251 students not taking remedial courses and appealing, 212 (84.5%) had their appeal granted and graduated, 8 (7.8%) had their appeal granted and did not graduate, and 31 (12.3%) had their appeal denied.(see Table 8).

Other degrees

Other degrees held by students prior to appeal were as follows: Business (n = 7), Education (n = 4), General Studies (n = 5), Law (n = 2), Math (n = 3), and Science (n = 2). Twenty-three students (7.6%) held other degrees prior to appeal while 279 (92.4%) of the students did not have other degrees. Of the 23 (7.6%) students with other degrees, 20 (86.9%) had their appeal granted and graduated, one (4.3%) had their appeal granted and did not graduate, and two (8.7%) had their appeal denied. Of the 279 (92.4%)
students without other degrees, 230 (82.4%) had their appeal granted and graduated, 11 (4.0%) had their appeal granted and did not graduate, and 38 (13.6%) had their appeal denied (see Table 9).

Table 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of Students' Appeal and Graduation Status by Remediation Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>APPEAL STATUS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remediation Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentage of successfully appealing students graduated within the specified remediation status. "Percentage of successfully appealing students not graduated within the specified remediation status. "Percentage of unsuccessfully appealing students within the specified remediation status. "Percentage of total number of appealing students.

**Year and Semester of Appeal**

Students remained in the nursing program from one to five years depending upon the number of students to be admitted in a particular year or semester, the available
faculty, and individual academic performance. Course availability was dependent on the student to faculty ratio (10:1) set by the State Board of Nursing in Louisiana (Nurse Practice Act, 1990). Students were not permitted to progress in the program until such time as faculty were available. Over two-thirds of the student appeals took place in their second and third years of nursing school. The greatest number of students to appeal was 110 (36.4%) in their second year of nursing school (see Table 10).

Table 9
Frequency of Students' Appeal and Graduation Status by Other Degrees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Degree</th>
<th>APPEAL STATUS</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GRANTED</td>
<td>DENIED</td>
<td>Totals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graduated</td>
<td>Not Graduated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No other degree</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>. 279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>82.4</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>92.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has other degree</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>86.9</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>302</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|                | 82.8      | 4.0        | 13.2       | 100.0 |

*Percentage of successfully appealing students graduated within the specified category of other degree. °Percentage of successfully appealing students not graduated within the specified category of other degree. ¶Percentage of unsuccessfully appealing students within the specified
category of other degree. "Percentage of total number of appealing students.

The highest percentage of students to appeal successfully and graduate was in their first year of nursing school. Fifty-three (88.3%) of the students who appealed in their first year graduated. The percentage of students successfully appealing and graduating decreased as the year of appeal was later in their program. Also the percentage of students with appeals denied increased as the year of appeal was later in their program (see Table 10).

The semester of appeal for progression by the students appealing could have been Spring, Summer or Fall. Almost 90% of all the appeals were made in the Spring (47.0%) and Fall (42.7%) semesters. The lowest percentage of students to appeal successfully and graduate was in the Summer with only 48.4% of the students graduating. Of the remaining 51.6%, 3.2% of the students who had their appeals granted did not graduate and 48.4% of the students had their appeals denied. An average of 86.7% of students appealing during Spring and Fall graduated. This information is presented in Table 11.

Reason for Appeal

Two major reasons for the students to appeal for progression in the nursing program were noted: academic and non-academic. The academic variables for analysis were:
pre-nursing GPA on required courses, GPA at appeal, nursing GPA at graduation, and overall GPA at graduation.

Table 10

**Frequency of Students' Appeal and Graduation Status by Year of Appeal**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Appeal</th>
<th>APPEAL STATUS</th>
<th>GRANTED</th>
<th>DENIED</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Graduated</td>
<td>Not Graduated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Year</td>
<td></td>
<td>53</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>88.3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Year</td>
<td></td>
<td>91</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>82.7</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Year</td>
<td></td>
<td>84</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>82.4</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Year</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th Year</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td>250</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>82.8</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentage of successfully appealing students graduated within the specified year of appeal.  
*Percentage of successfully appealing students not graduated within the specified year of appeal.  
*Percentage of unsuccessfully appealing students within the specified year of appeal.  
*Percentage of total number of appealing students.
Table 11

**Frequency of Students' Appeal and Graduation Status by Semester of Appeal**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester of Appeal</th>
<th>APPEAL STATUS</th>
<th>Graduated</th>
<th>Not Graduated</th>
<th>DENIED</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td></td>
<td>123</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>86.6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>47.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td></td>
<td>112</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>86.8</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>42.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td>250</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>82.8</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a*Percentage of successfully appealing students graduated within the specified semester of appeal.  
*b*Percentage of successfully appealing students not graduated within the specified semester of appeal.  
*c*Percentage of unsuccessfully appealing students within the specified semester of appeal.  
*d*Percentage of total number of appealing students.

The non-academic factors were failure to register in a timely fashion or failure to finish courses within the designated semester. Most students appealed progression in the nursing program for academic reasons (94.4%). However, there was no apparent difference in percentages of
graduation for students who appealed for academic reasons (82.8%) and those who appealed for non-academic reasons (82.4%). This information is in Table 12.

Table 12

Frequency of Students' Appeal and Graduation Status by Reason for Appeal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPEAL STATUS</th>
<th>GRANTED</th>
<th></th>
<th>DENIED</th>
<th></th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graduated</td>
<td>Not Graduated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Appeal</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>285</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>82.8</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>94.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-academic</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>82.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>302</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>82.8</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*aPercentage of successfully appealing students graduated within the specified reason for appeal.  
bPercentage of successfully appealing students not graduated within the specified reason for appeal.  
cPercentage of unsuccessfully appealing students within the specified reason for appeal.  
dPercentage of total number of appealing students.
**Grade Point Averages in the Nursing Program**

Grade point averages were used by nursing faculty to assess student academic progress and potential for appeal. The following grade point averages were calculated for this study: pre-nursing grade point averages on required courses, grade point averages at appeal, nursing grade point averages at graduation, and overall grade point averages at graduation. The mean pre-nursing grade point averages on required courses for the total group (n = 302) was 2.84 with a standard deviation of 0.214. Individual student grade point averages ranged from 2.41 to 3.33. The mean grade point averages at appeal for the total group (n = 302) was 2.03 with a standard deviation of 0.432. The averages ranged from 1.00 to 3.59. This information is presented in Table 13.

The mean nursing grade point averages at graduation for the total group (n = 250) who filed appeals that were granted and who graduated was 2.74 with a standard deviation of 0.249. The averages ranged from 2.50 to 3.99. The mean overall grade point averages at graduation for the total group (n = 250) who filed appeals that were granted and who graduated was 2.98 with a standard deviation of 0.256. The averages ranged from 2.70 to 3.90. This information is presented on Table 13.
Table 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Point Averages</th>
<th>APPEAL STATUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GRANTED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graduated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-nursing GPA on required courses</td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPA at appeal</td>
<td>0.222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing GPA at graduation</td>
<td>2.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall GPA at graduation</td>
<td>0.427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.256</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** Range for pre-nursing GPA on required courses = 2.41 - 3.33; range for GPA at appeal = 1.00 - 3.59; range for nursing GPA at graduation = 2.50 - 3.99; range for overall GPA at graduation = 2.70 - 3.90.

a Mean GPAs of successfully appealing students graduated.
b Mean GPAs of successfully appealing students not graduated.
c Mean GPAs of unsuccessfully appealing students.
d Mean GPAs of total number of appealing students.

**OBJECTIVE II**

The second objective was to compare those nursing students who successfully appealed and graduated (n = 250)
to those who successfully appealed but did not graduate (n = 12) using independent continuous and categorical variables. The dependent variable was successfully graduating from the nursing program. Marital status, gender, race, residence, remediation, other degree, year/semester of appeal and reason for appeal were categorical independent variables. Chi-Square was used to determine if these variables were independent of graduation status.

Analysis indicated that all of the categorical variables were independent of graduation status. Residence could not be analyzed due to small numbers and too many empty cells. This information is in Table 14.

Table 14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>6.60</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.086</td>
<td>Independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.637</td>
<td>Independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.885</td>
<td>Independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remediation</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.094</td>
<td>Independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Degree</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.967</td>
<td>Independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year of Appeal</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.502</td>
<td>Independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester of Appeal</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.859</td>
<td>Independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Appeal</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.962</td>
<td>Independent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Age, ACT scores, pre-nursing GPA on required courses, and GPA at appeal were continuous independent variables. These variables were compared by group (graduated or not graduated) using the t-test statistical procedure. Results presented in Table 15 indicated that the groups were not significantly different for any of the variables.

The t-test procedure was used to compare the groups on the variable age. The test revealed that the groups were not significantly different, \( t(12) = -0.96, p = 0.359 \). This information is in Table 15.

The t-test procedure was used to compare the groups on the variables ACT scores. The tests revealed that the groups were not significantly different (ACT Math \( t(12) = 0.05, p = 0.957 \); ACT Science \( t(14) = 0.30, p = 0.766 \); ACT English \( t(13) = 0.23, p = 0.822 \); ACT Composite \( t(14) = -0.19, p = 0.852 \)). This information is in Table 15.

The t-test procedure was used to compare the groups on the variable pre-nursing GPA on required courses. The test revealed that the groups were not significantly different, \( t(13) = 0.79, p = 0.443 \) (see Table 15).

The t-test procedure was used to compare the groups on the variable GPA at time of appeal. The test revealed that the groups were not significantly different, \( t(12) = -1.27, p = 0.230 \) (see Table 15).
Table 15

A t-Test Analysis of Graduation Status and Continuous Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Graduated Mean</th>
<th>Not Graduated Mean</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>26.70</td>
<td>28.50</td>
<td>-0.96</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT Math</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT English</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT Composite</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-nursing GPA on required courses</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPA at appeal</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>-1.27</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.230</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Graduated n = 250, Not Graduated n = 12

OBJECTIVE III

Objective three was to determine if demographic and academic predictors of success exist for nursing students who have appealed for progression, and if significant predictors of success are found, describe the prediction model. The researcher chose to analyze only data from students who were successful in their appeal (n = 262) since the students who were unsuccessful (n = 40) would have no chance to graduate. These predictors, once identified, significantly increase the researchers' ability to predict whether successfully appealing students would graduate or not graduate. To determine whether demographic
and academic predictors of success existed, discriminant analysis was used. The variables age, marital status, gender, race, remediation, ACT scores, other degree, year of appeal, semester of appeal, reason for appeal, and GPA at appeal were input to determine a linear discriminant function. The following variables were measured as categorical data: marital status, gender, race, residence, remediation, other degree, year of appeal, semester of appeal and reason for appeal. Four of these variables (gender, remediation, other degree and reason for appeal) had only two categories and were input directly into the analysis. Two categorical variables were dummy coded (using 0's and 1's instead of continuous numbers) to prepare them for entry into the discriminant analysis. The recoded variables included: marital status recoded as married, divorced, single, or widowed; and race recoded as white, black or other. Graduation data (nursing GPA at graduation and overall GPA at graduation) was excluded from the analysis because those who did not graduate would have no measurement.

Using discriminant analysis, it was determined that six variables were significant in predicting failure (not graduated) or success (graduated). These variables were married, widowed, remediation, GPA at appeal, reason for appeal, and year of appeal. The Wilk's lambda value was calculated to show variability between groups (the closer
to 1, the weaker the relationship, the closer to 0, the stronger the relationship). The Wilk's lambda value for the six predictors was 0.93079 ($p = 0.0052$) with the individual values being cumulative. This information is in Table 16.

Table 16

| Academic and Demographic Variables that Significantly Discriminate on Graduation Status |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Variable                        | Order of Entry  | Cumulative Wilk's lambda | $p$   |
| Year of Appeal                  | 1               | 0.97442           | 0.0095|
| Widowed                         | 2               | 0.95076           | 0.0025|
| Married                         | 3               | 0.94794           | 0.0032|
| Remediation                     | 4               | 0.94216           | 0.0040|
| Reason for Appeal               | 5               | 0.93667           | 0.0048|
| GPA at appeal                   | 6               | 0.93079           | 0.0052|

The structure coefficients ordered by size of correlation within discriminant function are presented in Table 17. The rule of thumb for interpreting structure coefficients is to examine all of those which are 0.30 or higher in value (Barrick & Warmbrod, 1988). Variables that met the criteria were year of appeal, widowed, remediation, and GPA at appeal. All of these variables were included in the prediction model developed through discriminant analysis. However, two variables in the prediction model
(married and reason for appeal) had structure coefficient values lower than 0.30 (see Table 17).

Table 17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Coefficients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year of Appeal</td>
<td>-0.59418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>0.50419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remediation</td>
<td>-0.38095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPA at Appeal</td>
<td>0.33535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>0.21692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Appeal</td>
<td>-0.19116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The substantive significance of percentage of cases correctly classified was assessed using the Tau statistic. The equation used for the Tau statistic as presented by Barrick and Warmbrod (1988) is given in Equation 1. This procedure determines the proportion of cases correctly classified, more than would have been expected by chance. The findings were a 52.67% improvement over chance or randomness that could be obtained on these students using the predictor formula.

Equation 1

\[
\text{\textsc{tau}} = \frac{n_c - \sum p_i n_i}{N - \sum p_i n_i}
\]

\(n_c\) = number correctly classified

\(p_i\) = probability of being classified into a group by chance
\[ n_i = \text{number in a group} \]

\[ N = \text{total number of cases (Barrick and Warmbrod, 1988)} \]

\[ \text{Tau for all variables} = \frac{200 - 250(0.5) + 12(0.5)}{262 - 250(0.5) + 12(0.5)} = 52.67\% \]

The second portion of this objective was to describe the prediction model(s) if significant predictors of success were found. The significant predictors indicated by the discriminant analysis were as follows: married, widowed, remediation, GPA at appeal, reason for appeal, and year of appeal. Both standardized and unstandardized canonical discriminant function coefficients were identified. This information is presented in Table 18.

Table 18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year of Appeal</td>
<td>-0.31349</td>
<td>-0.53815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>3.22361</td>
<td>0.64294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>0.70690</td>
<td>0.32270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remediation</td>
<td>-0.86480</td>
<td>-0.31680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Appeal</td>
<td>-1.44494</td>
<td>-0.32577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPA at appeal</td>
<td>0.71468</td>
<td>0.30750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>622.00400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The standardized canonical coefficients were used to construct the following prediction model:
Discriminant Score = Married (0.32270) + Widowed 
(0.64294) - Remediation (0.31680) + GPA at appeal 
(0.30750) - Reason for Appeal (0.32577) - Year of Appeal 
(0.53815)

In this model, married and widowed were coded as yes = 1, 
and no = 0; remediation was coded as yes = 1, and no = 0; 
reason for appeal was coded as academic = 1, and 
non-academic = 0; and year of appeal was coded as first 
year = 1, second year = 2, third year = 3, fourth year = 4, 
and fifth year = 5. In order to predict success, the 
appropriate numbers may be substituted into the equation. 
This gives a discriminant score for each individual. The 
above model predicted that 198 students would graduate, 
however, 193 actually graduated and five did not graduate. 
The model also predicted that 64 would not graduate, 
however, only seven did not graduate and 57 did graduate. 
Seventy-six percent of the students were correctly 
classified by groups (see Table 19).

Table 19

| Actual vs Predicted Classification of Students To Graduate or Not Graduate |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
|                             | Graduate | Not Graduate |
| Actual Number of Students   | Predicted                   |
| Graduate                    | 250      | 193          | 57           |
|                             | (77.2%)  | (22.8%)      |
| Not Graduate                | 12       | 5            | 7            |
|                             | (41.7%)  | (58.3%)      |

Note. 76.3% of "grouped" cases correctly classified
CHAPTER 5
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this descriptive research study was to determine if predictors for success existed among nursing students at Southeastern Louisiana University who were granted appeals, based on special circumstances, by the University Progression and Retention Committee.

Specific objectives of this research study were:

1. Describe, using demographic and academic data, the accessible population of nursing students who graduated following successful appeals or did not graduate (following successful or non-successful appeals) from the nursing program at Southeastern Louisiana University.

2. Compare those nursing students who successfully appealed and graduated to those who successfully appealed but did not graduate using independent continuous and categorical variables.

3. Determine if demographic and academic predictors of success exist for nursing students who have appealed for progression, and if significant predictors of success are found, describe the prediction model.
The population (n = 4,875) for this research study was all students in the Southeastern Louisiana University School of Nursing. The accessible population was comprised of 302 students who appealed to the Progression and Retention Committee from January, 1988 to May, 1995, and who have graduated or not progressed. For objective one, the analysis was achieved by measuring the demographic variables and the academic background variables for each of the following groups of students: students with appeals granted who graduated (n = 250); students with appeals granted who did not graduate (n = 12), and students with appeals denied who did not graduate (n = 40). However, for objectives two through four, the group of students with appeals denied (n = 40) was excluded because they had no opportunity to graduate.

Data were collected on all 302 students who appealed to the Progression and Retention Committee using a researcher designed instrument. The instrument consisted of demographic and academic information.

Descriptive statistics were used to describe the demographic and academic measures of the students; age, gender, marital status, residence, race, pre-nursing GPA on required courses, GPA at time of appeal, nursing GPA at graduation, overall GPA at graduation, other degrees, remediation, and ACT assessment test scores. The Chi-Square was used for group comparison on marital status, gender,
race, remediation, other degree, year/semester of appeal and reason for appeal. The t-test statistical procedure was used to compare age, ACT scores, pre-nursing GPA on required courses, and GPA at appeal to the dependent variable of graduation status. Discriminant analysis was used to determine differences between students who graduated and those who did not graduate.

Three-hundred-two students who appealed were studied. Most of these were single white females who had not had remedial courses prior to nursing school. Chi-Square analysis indicated all variables were independent. Using the t-test, no significant differences were found between continuous variables (age, ACT scores, pre-nursing GPA on required courses, and GPA at appeal) and graduation status. Six of the variables were identified by discriminant analysis to be used in developing a model that could be used for prediction of success factors for students and faculty. Those predictor variables were year of appeal, widowed, remediation, GPA at appeal, married, and reason for appeal.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The following conclusions and recommendations were derived from the findings of the research study of students who had appealed for progression in the Southeastern Louisiana University School of Nursing.
Objective I

The first objective was to describe, using demographic and academic data, the accessible population of nursing students who graduated following successful appeals or did not graduate (following successful or non-successful appeals) from the nursing program at Southeastern Louisiana University.

1. Of those students who appealed, younger students (20 - 24 years old) are more likely to file appeals while older students (35 - 41 years old) are least likely to file appeals. However, the older students have a higher graduation rate once they have successfully appealed. This is based on the finding that 44.4% of the total students filing appeals were in the age range 20 - 24 years old and 12.9% of the students were in the age range 35 - 41 years old. Also, the percent of older students successfully appealing and graduating was 89.8%.

2. Of the students who appealed, single students are more likely to appeal whereas divorced students have the highest rate of graduation after successful appeals. This is based on the finding that 48.7% of the students filing appeals were single and 92.8% of the divorced students graduated following successful appeal.
3. The majority of students appealing for retention and progression are female. This is based on the finding that 95% of the accessible population were female and 5% of those filing an appeal were male.

4. Of those students who appeal, white students are more likely to file an appeal for progression. However, the black students who appealed were more successful in graduating than both the white and other race students. This is based on the finding that 98% of the students were white. Also, 100% of the black students successfully appealed and graduated whereas only 82.8% of the white students and 66.7% of the other race students successfully appealed and graduated.

5. Students filing an appeal are more likely to reside in parishes with a large metropolitan population. This is based on the finding that 22.8% of the students were from Jefferson parish (Greater New Orleans area) and 29.5% were from East Baton Rouge parish (Greater Baton Rouge area).

6. Students appealing in their first year of nursing studies are more likely to have their appeal granted and graduate than if they appeal later in their curriculum. Also, students appealing later in the program tend to have a higher rate of appeals denied. This is based on the finding that 88.3% of students
who appealed in their first year were successful in their appeal and graduated, compared to 66.7% of the students who appealed in their fifth year. Conversely, 33.3% of the students appealing in their fifth year had their appeals denied. The researcher recommends further study to identify reasons for variation in student success dependent on year of appeal.

7. Students who appeal in the Summer semester are less likely to have their appeals granted and graduate. This is based on the finding that 48.4% of the students appealing in the Summer semester have their appeals granted and graduate while 48.4% have their appeals denied. The researcher recommends exploration of the lower success rates for student appeals and graduation in the Summer semester.

8. Reason for appeal (academic or non-academic) as a single factor does not determine student success and graduation. This is due to the finding that academic reason for appeal and non-academic reason for appeal showed no difference in the rate of students' successful appeal and graduation on the frequency data. This lack of difference may be insignificant, however, due to the fact that only 5.6% of the students appealed for non-academic reasons.
9. Students who are granted their appeal either significantly improve their GPA beyond the mean GPA at appeal or drop from the program. This is based on the observation that the mean GPA (2.03) of students at appeal \((n = 302)\) was distinctly lower than the mean overall GPA (2.98) of students who successfully appealed and graduated \((n = 250)\). The researcher recommends further statistical analysis be performed on the student GPA data to explore this phenomena. Also the question may be raised, "What influence does the student's interest (motivation) level play in the lower GPA with pre-nursing courses versus higher GPAs in nursing courses?". A recommendation for practice may be that counselors should inform students of this trend and encourage them to apply themselves. Caution should be exercised when counseling students with borderline grade point averages (neither give false hope nor discourage students).

10. The variables ACT scores, remediation and other degrees showed no remarkable variation in students who successfully appealed and graduated or did not graduate and those students who were denied appeal.

**Objective II**

The second objective was to compare those nursing students who successfully appealed and graduated \((n = 250)\) to those who successfully appealed but did not graduate
(n = 12) using independent continuous and categorical variables. Both statistical procedures used in analyzing data for this objective (t-test and Chi-square) yielded similar yet no significant differences between the students who successfully appealed and graduated and those who successfully appealed but did not graduate.

**Objective III**

The third objective was to determine if demographic and academic predictors of success exist for nursing students who have appealed for progression, and if significant predictors of success are found, describe the prediction model. Development of a prediction model was possible. Year of appeal, widowed, remediation, GPA at appeal, married, and reason for appeal were significant predictors of nursing students' success (graduate) or failure (not graduate). This was based on the results of the discriminant analysis. The percent of `grouped' cases correctly classified using the predictor model is 76.3%. The Tau statistic indicates that the model increases the researcher's ability to predict student success or failure by 52.67% over chance or randomness.

The researcher recommends conducting a study to validate the prediction formula for use in counseling students who appeal for progression in the nursing program. In practice, evaluation of student's at-risk status may be evaluated through use of the prediction model. A knowledge
of the potential to graduate or not graduate based on prediction classification may help the counselors better evaluate students' chance for success and thus, affect career counseling and/or student decision-making.
REFERENCES


Owens, H. (1980). They will take you to court if you don't watch out. *Community and Junior College Journal, 51*(32), 12-16.


OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH AND ASSESSMENT
Data Analysis/Information Request Form

Note: Please read directions on back prior to completing and submitting this form.

Date Request Submitted: 11-1-95

Name and Title of Person making Request: Nursing Students Who Initiate Progression Appeals

Check one: Faculty ☐ Staff ☐ Student ☐ Off-Campus ☐

Department/Office: Nursing

Phone: (504) 765-2315 Fax: 765-2315

SLU Faculty Box: 4359 Essen Lane, B.R., LA 70809

Information/Data Analysis Requested:
☐ Student Demographics
☐ Student Academic Information
☐ Appeals Data of Students Appealing To Progression and Retention Committee

How will data analysis/information being requested be used?
☐ Dissertation
☐ Report to Progression and Retention Committee

Required signatures (as appropriate)
Diane Blanchard
Dr. Peggy Harris
Immediate Supervisor

Person making request

Additional Signature

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Name of Project/Report: Factors Influencing Undergraduate Nursing Students Who Initiate Progression Appeals

Date Request Received: 11-1-95

Type of Request: Internal ☐ External ☐ MFA ☐ Inst Eff ☐

Staff Members Assigned: Dr. E. Bond

Negotiated Deadline Date: 11-7-95

Task Analysis Completed: Yes ☐ No ☐

Information Source: Diane Blanchard

Date Completed: 12-3-95

Number of Staff Hours: 4 hrs.
APPENDIX B: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT
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APPENDIX C: LETTER OF APPROVAL FOR STUDY
TO: Diane Blanchard
FROM: Dr. Emily Bond, Interim Chair
DATE:
RE: CUHARS Action on Proposed Project

This memo is to inform you of the CUHARS action with regard to your proposal:

Title: "Exploration of Academic Appeal Routes by Nursing Students in a University Teaching Program"

This proposal was given:

- Expedited Review: X
- Full Committee Review: ___________

The result was:

- Full Approval: ______
- Conditional Approval: 11/7/95
- Provisional Approval: ______
- Denied Approval: ______

Failure to acquire CUHARS full approval before implementation for any project which involves humans or live vertebrate animals as "subjects" means that the PI is not acting in "good faith" with university policy and is not, therefore, guaranteed the protection of the university.

If anything other than Full Approval is recommended, it is your responsibility, as investigator, to submit changes/corrections or plans to accommodate conditions listed below to the Office of Sponsored Research and Contracts prior to initiating the project.

Committee Comments:
The Committee is concerned with:
1) The personal nature of the reasons for appeal and if the students were asked to sign an informed consent prior to the appeals process.
2) The confidentiality of the information gathered must be addressed in light of the student number (Social Security number?) being placed on the data collection instrument.
VITA

Diane Blanchard, a Louisiana native, graduated from Jackson High School. She received an associate degree in nursing from the University of Southern Mississippi, a baccalaureate degree in nursing from Alcorn State University, and a double masters degree in psychiatric nursing and nursing administration from the University of Southern Mississippi.

Diane began her nursing career as a registered nurse at East Louisiana State Hospital, in Jackson, Louisiana. Her overall career has spanned 25 years in psychiatric nursing, critical care and nursing education. She now practices as a clinical nurse specialist in Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center where she provides professional advanced practice skills for clients. She also is an associate professor of nursing education at Southeastern Louisiana State University School of Nursing and serves as adjunct nursing faculty at Alcorn State University. She is the founder and chairman of the board at Health Services Consulting, Inc.

Diane is married to Gerald Blanchard and they have three children, and two grandchildren. She is committed to God, the Catholic Church, her community. She actively participates in over 12 professional organizations and 10
volunteer service groups. Future plans are to continue professional scholarly activity and master the art of leading stained glass.
DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

Candidate: Karen Diane Hadskey Blanchard

Major Field: Vocational Education

Title of Dissertation: Factors Influencing Completion Status of Undergraduate Nursing Students Who Initiate Progression Appeals

Approved:

[Signatures]

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

[Signatures]

Date of Examination:

February 25, 1996