



# The Impact of Holistic Admissions Review Criteria on Racial and Ethnic Diversity of the Student Population



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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this presentation is to compare and describe the successes and lessons learned from pre- and post-implementation of a holistic admissions model at the Phillips School of Nursing at Mount Sinai Beth Israel (PSON).

## INTRODUCTION

- ❖ As a single purpose educational institution, PSON's mission is "to provide an exceptional nursing education to a diverse student body in an inclusive, equitable environment that will advance the delivery of outstanding healthcare to local and global communities".
- ❖ PSON's vision formalized as an established schematic for the School's future, speaks to actively responding to society's need for a culturally diverse, caring, knowledgeable, and skilled nursing workforce that utilizes evidence-based research as the foundation for contemporary education and clinical practice.
- ❖ The School's Strategic Plan emphasizes the goal of improving human health through strategic initiatives in the areas of teaching, multi-disciplinary scholarship, and service to the local and global community through three guiding principles: to cultivate a diverse, inclusive environment; to promote inter-professional education, practice, and research; and to purposefully integrate emerging technology

## BACKGROUND

- ❖ PSON recognizes that the admissions process is crucial to enrolling and graduating a diverse group of students to address health disparities.
- ❖ In 2017, PSON expanded the experiential criteria in its admissions rubric tool to include: prior health care and other work experience, leadership roles, community service, research experience, military experience, ability to work in teams, caring for an ill family member, overcoming challenges; first in family to attend college and English as a second language. This new rubric tool continued to gather the previous, standard measures of evaluation, i.e., prior college GPAs, grades in pre-requisite courses, essay/statement of purpose, and letters of recommendation.

## RESULTS

- ❖ Table 1 shows the comparison of race and ethnicity between the two groups including the number of students and percentages for each major race/ethnic category.
- ❖ In the pre-holistic group, the race and ethnicity data was gathered from students after admissions. In the post-holistic group, the data was gathered as part of the NursingCAS application.
- ❖ Overall, there were some slight changes in the diversity of the student population. Results demonstrated a decrease of 1.5% in Non-Hispanic White and Caucasian students, decrease of 2% decrease in Non-Hispanic Black or African American students, and a decrease of 3.75% in Pacific Islanders. Increases for the same period: 1.75% increase in Hispanic/Latino students, 2.25% increase in Asian students, and an increase of 2.75% of students who identified as two races or more.

## METHOD

- ❖ Using convenience sampling, a total of 800 students' data were interpreted and analyzed for this study. Data regarding the student's race and ethnicity, along with the year they were admitted, were the only two pieces of information used for the analysis. Names were replaced with numbers ranging from 1-400 for each group.
- ❖ The sample of 800 students was separated into two groups: pre-holistic admissions and post-holistic admissions. Students in the pre-holistic admissions group were admitted to prior to the implementation of the holistic review process in 2017, served as the control group and included students admitted during the 2012 to 2016 academic years. Students in the post-holistic admissions group served as the experimental group and were admitted during the 2017-2020 academic years. The length of years were not used to determine the extraction of data, only the number of students needed for an equal sample size. The shorter number of years in the post-holistic experiential group is due to an increase in enrollment of larger cohort sizes. Race and ethnicity were analyzed using descriptive analysis for both groups.

Table 1: Comparison of race and ethnicity of pre-holistic and post-holistic admission groups

Race/Ethnicity	Pre-Holistic Admission Group 2012-2016		Post-Holistic Admission Group 2017-2020	
	# of students	%	# of students	%
Non-Hispanic White or Caucasian	172	43%	166	41.5%
Hispanic/Latino	60	15%	67	16.75%
Asian	62	15.5%	71	17.75%
Non-Hispanic Black or African American	85	21.25%	77	19.25%
Pacific Islander	21	5.25%	6	1.5%
American Indian or Native American	0	0.00%	1	0.0025%
Two or more races	0	0%	11	2.75%
Total number of students	400		400	

## CONCLUSION

- ❖ Holistic review has had a positive impact on the school, including increased diversity; admission of students who are better prepared for success in the profession; admission of students who have faced barriers to success in their lifetimes and who would have otherwise been excluded; and increased awareness of and sensitivity to diversity among admissions committee members.
- ❖ Anecdotally, the faculty has noted that the students appear more engaged and open-minded during classroom discussions. Also noted was that completion rates and the median cumulative GPAs increased for the post-holistic group.

**REFERENCES:** American Association of Colleges of Nursing Diversity and Inclusion website. <https://www.aacnnursing.org/Diversity>  
<https://www.aacnnursing.org/Portals/42/News/White-Papers/AACN-White-Paper-Promising-Practices-in-Holistic-Admissions-Review-December-2020.pdf>

