

Increasing Representation In Graduate Nursing Education: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Dimensions of Nursing as a Strategic Recruitment Tool

Alexander Murphy



Background/Problem

Investigates the role of targeted admissions programming in promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion within graduate nursing education. Specifically evaluating the impact of the *Dimensions of Nursing* sessions conducted by the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing (JHSON) Office of Admissions on the recruitment, enrollment, and retention of students from historically underrepresented backgrounds.

Efforts to address inequities in higher education and professional fields have increasingly centered on improving representation for historically marginalized populations. These initiatives are integral to admissions, campus climate, and workforce development programs. Yet, these efforts are situated within a complex landscape of historical legacies, legal frameworks, institutional practices, and social debates. Is it valuable to prospective students to create a sense of community and belonging prior to their arrival on campus?

Literature Review

- Anderson provides a journalistic overview of recent legal and institutional responses to DEI in university admissions.
- Campbell et al’s findings underscore the importance of addressing structural barriers and developing pipeline programs to support underrepresented students beyond the undergraduate level.
- Garcia and Good explore tangible benefits of targeted pipeline programs, linking educational access to broader public health and workforce diversity goals
- Skrentny traces the evolution of civil rights law and identity-conscious policymaking in the United States.
- Zamani-Gallaher et al. draw from institutional data, campus case studies, and DEI implementation models to argue for holistic admissions practices and systemic transformation.

Dimensions of Nursing

- What – virtual sessions that focus on underrepresented populations experiences, clinical work, and research.
- Who – current students across graduate programs and faculty.
- Why – to regularly display JHSON’s commitment to health equity for prospective students to better understand the schools mission and values.
- Topic Examples:
 - Accessible Healthcare in Areas of Humanitarian Crisis
 - First-Generation Student Success and Support
 - Health Equity Among Transgender People
 - Nursing Education and Practice in Rural Areas
 - Fireside Chat with the Center for Global Initiatives
 - The Historical Impact of Black Nurses
 - Transitioning into Nursing as a Second Career
 - Men in Nursing

Anticipated Outcomes

- Increased matriculation rates among underrepresented populations.
- Strengthened perceptions of inclusion and belonging.
- Heightened visibility of contributions by underrepresented groups within nursing and academia.
- Generation of actionable, data-driven recommendations to sustain and expand diversity initiatives.

Methodology

This project uses a mixed methodology approach and incorporates both qualitative and quantitative data. This study conducted a survey of 350 participants with 30 respondents of matriculated students who attended a *Dimensions of Nursing* session. Data from this survey will be used to create sessions that address the research and health care needs of historically marginalized populations.

Survey Questions/Results

Prior to applying, did you attend a Dimensions of Nursing session?

After attending a session, did you have a better understanding of JHSON’s commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion?

In your participation, which topics stood out? Why?

Did attending these session influence your decision to enroll at JHU?

What is your current age range?

What is your gender identity?

What is your racial and ethnic makeup?

Are you a first-generation college student?

Were there any topics that you would have liked to learn more about?

- 8.5% respondents – results are inconclusive on effectiveness in recruitment.
- 20% of respondents enrollment decision was influenced by their attendance.
- 70% of respondents identify as racial/ethnic minorities.
- 28% of respondents identify as first-generation students.
- Post-attendance surveys will provide applicant perspective for more data.
- Collaboration with the Office of DEI to ensure belonging post matriculation.

References

- Anderson, G. (2024, February 13). The role of diversity, equity, and inclusion in university admissions. MoldStud. <https://moldstud.com/articles/p-the-role-of-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-in-university-admissions>.
- Campbell, C. D., Sanchez, G. J., & Tierney, W. G. (2004). The road ahead: Improving diversity in graduate education. Center for Higher Education Policy Analysis.
- Garcia, E., & Goode, C. A. (2023). Addressing healthcare workforce diversity: The impact of diversity-focused special master’s and postbaccalaureate programs on medical education and the physician workforce. *Journal of Best Practices for Healthcare Professions Diversity*, 16(1), 15–43.
- Skrentny, J. D. (2022). *The minority rights revolution*. Harvard University Press.
- Zamani-Gallaher, E. M., Huntley, L., Ogletree, C. J., & Eaton, S. E. (2023). *The case for affirmative action on campus: Concepts of equity, considerations for practice*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.



Increasing Representation in Graduate Nursing Education: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Dimensions of Nursing as a Strategic Recruitment Tool

Alexander Murphy

Biography

Alexander Murphy is a first-generation college graduate with a Bachelors of Fine Arts in Dance Performance and Choreography from the University of Florida in 2018, and is currently enrolled in a Masters of Professional Studies in Higher Education Administration at Georgetown University. They currently work as an Assistant Director of Admissions and Recruitment at the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing and has over 6 years of professional admissions experience in higher education. Their admissions experience centers on recruiting students from historically marginalized communities to expand equitable access to the institutions they work for. Their professional philosophy centers on the idea that access to education must be proactive and intentional to reflect the communities they seek to serve.

Alexander's artistic and research interests are deeply interwoven with his professional practice. As a choreographer and interdisciplinary thinker, he explores Afro-centric and queer-centric epistemologies as tools for liberation and healing. His creative work aims to deconstruct Western norms imposed on the body and reimagine movement as a site of resistance and affirmation. Through performance, scholarship, and pedagogy, Alexander interrogates how dance can be a method for decolonizing the body, reclaiming cultural memory, and expanding our collective understanding of selfhood beyond dominant paradigms.

Alexander has received the Rising Star Award for the Southern Association of College Admissions Counselors in 2022 which is awarded to admissions representatives with less than five years of admissions experience and exemplify excellence and dedication to serving the needs of students. They have also served as the Vice President of the JHSON Staff Assembly where they advocate to senior leadership on the concerns and desires of around 120 staff members and now serves on the JHU Staff Advisory Council where they represent the School of Nursing staff at the institutional level.

Contact Information



Alexander Murphy
Assistant Director of Admissions
Johns Hopkins University
amurph63@jhu.edu