



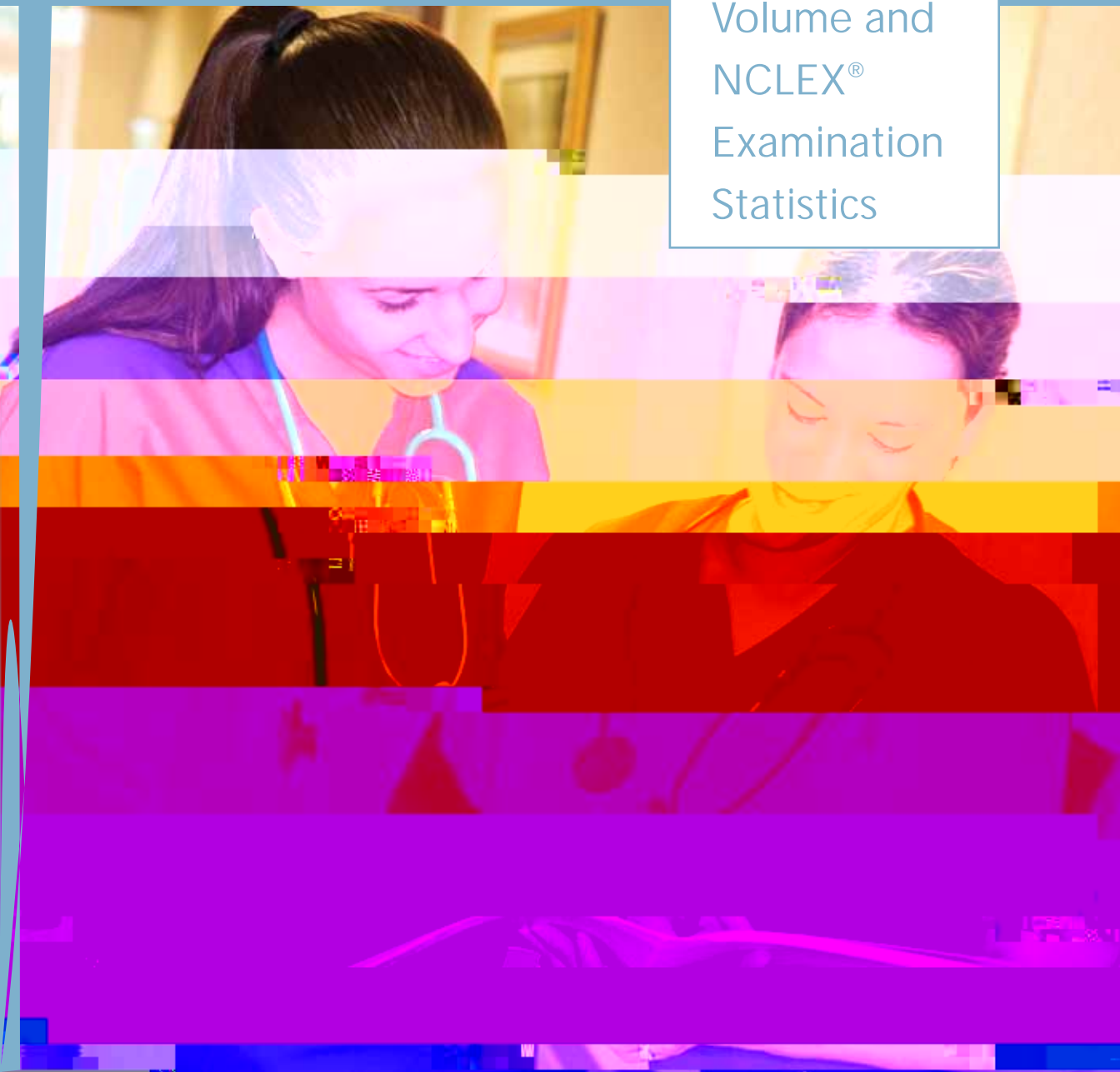
NCSBN

National Council of State Boards of Nursing

2

July 2010

2008 Nurse  
Licensee  
Volume and  
NCLEX®  
Examination  
Statistics



# 2008 Nurse Licensee Volume and NCLEX® Examination Statistics

Kevin Keenan, Ph.D.

Ada Winters, Ph.D.

Linda G.

Wendy L. MS

National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Inc. (NCSBN)





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1.	-			.....	3
2.	-			.....	3
3.	-	, 1	- 200	.....	0
.	-			.....	1
5.	-			.....	2
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## INTRODUCTION

The mission of the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN®) is to provide leadership to advance regulatory excellence by assisting member boards, collectively and individually, and to promote safe and effective nursing practice in the interest of protecting public health and welfare.

NCSBN serves as a consultant, liaison, advocate and researcher to its members, and as an educational and informational resource to policy makers and the general public. This publication provides statistics on the licensing activities of NCSBN's member boards and its two licensure examinations, the National Council Licensure Examination for Practical Nurses (NCLEX-PN®) and the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN®).

### Part I Licensee Statistics

The data reported in Part I of this document include licensing statistics of the 60 state and territorial boards of nursing. The numbers of new licenses by endorsement and examination, as well as the total number of active licenses are provided for each jurisdiction.

The data included in this publication provide licensing statistics for the period July 1, 2007, to

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## P

The data reported in this section indicate licensure processing activity and the total number of individuals licensed to practice within each jurisdiction from July 1, 2007, to June 30, 2008. All data was obtained from state and territorial boards of nursing.

Estimates were provided where the exact figure requested for this collection of data was unknown.

Data are presented in a series of tables. Table 1 lists the NCSBN member boards, the geographic locality within which a board of nursing (BON) has responsibility for regulating nursing practice (JD), the types of licenses for which a BON has licensing authority, and whether or not the BON is empowered to issue licenses or certificates to practice in a specialty area of nursing. Tables 2 through 5 provide data related to new licenses issued by endorsement or examination, total numbers of active licenses (both registered nurse [RN] and licensed practical/vocational nurse [LPN/VN]) by jurisdiction and graduates of foreign nursing programs licensed by jurisdiction. Table 6 provides a summary of licensing activities by examination and endorsement for RNs, LPN/VNs and graduates of foreign nursing programs. Tables 7 and 8 provide the numbers of active specialty licenses issued within each jurisdiction by specialty license category. Figure 1 provides a review of the numbers of active licenses for the years 1998 to 2008. Unless noted otherwise, all percentages are calculated in terms of column totals.

## Key Terms

**Registered Nurse (RN) and Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurse (LPN/VN)** obtain licensure by endorsement (if licensed in another jurisdiction) or by examination (if the applicant has never taken the appropriate NCLEX examination).

**Active License** figures are based on the reported actual or estimated total number of individuals holding an active license within a jurisdiction and represent the nurses available for employment. Due to an unknown number of individuals holding active licenses in more than one jurisdiction, the total number of active licenses nationwide may be higher than the total number of nurses.

**Advanced Practice License / APRN – Total Practice** figures and tables contain data for advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) groups: certified registered nurse anesthetist (CRNA); certified nurse midwife (CNM); certified nurse specialist (CNS); CNS-PSYCH/mental health; and nurse practitioner (NP).







JD	E a a			E d e e			T a Ne S a e	
	N	%		N	%		N	%
VT	3,617	3.83		808	0.99		4,425	2.23
WA	2,462	2.61		3,794	4.64		6,256	3.15
WI							4,365	2.20
WV-RN	884	0.94		1,414	1.73		2,298	1.16
WY	281	0.30		844	1.03		1,125	0.57
<b>T a</b>	<b>94,321</b>	<b>100.00</b>		<b>81,834</b>	<b>100.00</b>		<b>198,594</b>	<b>100.00</b>

No information available for Florida, Georgia-RN, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Montana, New Mexico, Utah and Virgin Islands.





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Table 4. Total Number of Applicants for Licensure by State

State	2007		2008	2009		2010	2011	
	Applicants	Passes		Applicants	Passes		Applicants	Passes
Alabama								
Alaska								
Arizona								
Arkansas								
California								
Colorado								
Connecticut								
Delaware								
District of Columbia								
Florida								
Georgia								
Hawaii								
Idaho								
Illinois								
Indiana								
Iowa								
Kansas								
Kentucky								
Louisiana								
Maine								
Maryland								
Massachusetts								
Michigan								
Minnesota								
Mississippi								
Missouri								
Montana								
Nebraska								
Nevada								
New Hampshire								
New Jersey								
New Mexico								
New York								
North Carolina								
North Dakota								
Ohio								
Oklahoma								
Oregon								
Pennsylvania								
Rhode Island								
South Carolina								
South Dakota								
Tennessee								
Texas								
Utah								
Vermont								
Virginia								
Washington								
West Virginia								
Wisconsin								
Wyoming								
Total								

JD	RN Graduate, Fee, Number, Jurisdiction	LPN/VN Graduate, Fee, Number, Jurisdiction
AL	40	1
AS	6	0
AZ	652	15
CA-RN	5,093	0
GU	16	9
IA	3	1
ID	18	2
LA-RN	50	0
MA	1,484	0
ME	21	0
MN	427	10
MO	46	3
MP	360	10
MS	30	7
NC	100	3
ND	14	0
NE	36	7
NH	0	0
NJ	38	0
OR	130	7
PA	356	18
RI	6	2
SC	105	6
TX	1,661	93
VA	87	6
WV-PN	0	10
WY	15	3
<b>T a</b>	<b>10,794</b>	<b>213</b>

Information provided by 27 jurisdictions









Revised 1. T a N<sub>y</sub>-be . Ac. e L<sub>re</sub> e : Re. e ed N<sub>y</sub>-e a d L<sub>re</sub> ed P ac. ta/V ca. a N<sub>y</sub>-e - 1998-2008





## 1 d.e. 1

In 1982, NCSBN revised the State Board Test Pool Examination (SBTPE) substantially. NCSBN changed the examination from a norm-referenced test to a criterion-referenced test, implemented a new test plan, and used Rasch's (1960) one parameter logistic model to calibrate items and measure candidates' abilities. At this time, NCSBN renamed the examinations the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN®) and the National Council Licensure Examination for Practical Nurses (NCLEX-PN®). However, these NCLEX® examinations were very different than the NCLEX

3. The results from the annual Standard Setting Survey, which solicits the opinions of employers and educators regarding the competence of the current cohort of entry-level nurses.
4. Information detailing the educational readiness of high school graduates who expressed an interest in nursing.

In April 1998, the passing standard for the NCLEX-RN examination increased from  $-0.42$  logits to  $-0.35$  logits. In April 2001, this standard was retained for another three years. In April 2004, the standard increased to  $-0.28$  logits. In April 2007, the standard was again increased to  $-0.21$  logits. The passing standard for the NCLEX-PN examination has experienced a similar increase over time. In April 1999, the passing standard for the NCLEX-PN examination increased from  $-0.51$  logits to  $-0.47$  logits. In April 2002, this standard was retained for another three years. In April 2005, the NCLEX-PN passing standard increased from  $-0.47$  to  $-0.42$  logits. Finally, in April 2008, the standard increased to  $-0.37$  logits. It is important to note that the registered nurse (RN) and practical nurse (PN) standards are not directly comparable because they are based on different item pools and different scopes of practice.

### Pass-Fail Decision

Candidate performance on the NCLEX examinations is reported only as a pass-fail decision. Scores are never reported. As a result, almost all the statistics presented here are pass rates or statistics based upon a pass-fail decision.

To make pass-fail decisions, the computer seeks to determine with 95% certainty whether the candidate's true ability is above or below the passing standard. To do this, three pieces of information must be known: the person's ability estimate, the precision of that estimate and the passing standard. After the minimum number of items has been answered, the computer compares the candidate's ability level to the standard required for passing. Candidates clearly above the passing standard pass. Candidates clearly below the passing standard fail.

If the candidate's ability level is close enough to the passing standard that it is not clear which side of

the passing standard his/her ability falls, the computer continues asking items. As more items are answered, the candidate's ability estimate becomes more precise. After each item, the candidate's ability level is recomputed, using all of the information (answers to all the items asked) available at that point. When it becomes clear on which side of the passing standard the candidate's ability falls, the exam ends.

Some candidates' abilities, of course, are very close to the passing standard. For these candidates, all items in the item pool might not provide enough information to be certain their ability is truly above or below the passing standard. These are the candidates who take the maximum number of items. Once the maximum number of items has been administered, the computer waives the 95% certainty requirement and makes a pass or fail decision based upon the candidate's final ability estimate. If the candidate's ability estimate is above the passing standard, **3**

If an NCLEX examination ends because time runs out, then the computer does not have enough information for candidates to pass. The key word here is consistently. If a candidate's ability estimate has been consistently above the passing standard over the last 60 items, then he/she will pass, despite having run out of time.



Table 2. Summary of Statistics for the U.S.-Educated Candidate	
NCLEX-RN	January-December 2008
Passing Standard <sup>1</sup>	-0.21 logits
Estimated Decision Consistency <sup>2</sup>	0.91
Average Test Length <sup>3</sup>	121 items
Percent of Candidates Taking the Minimum Number of Items	51.0%
Percent of Candidates Taking the Maximum Number of Items	14.1%
Average Testing Time <sup>4</sup>	2 hours, 32 minutes
Percent of Candidates Taking the Maximum Amount of Time	2.2%

<sup>1</sup>The NCLEX-RN passing standard scale uses logits as the unit of measurement. Logits is short for log-odds-units. These units have no inherent meaning with regard to nursing content and in fact have an arbitrary zero point, but logits are practical because the probability of a correct response can easily be computed when the candidate's ability and the item's difficulty are known. Typically, the logit range on the NCLEX-RN scale is from -2.00 (easy items or low ability candidates) to 2.00 (difficult items or high ability candidates).

<sup>2</sup>Estimated Decision Consistency is an indicator of reliability. Conceptually, it is the proportion of pass-fail decisions that would remain the same if the same population were retested immediately after their first test (assuming no learning or fatigue effects using a different set of items).

<sup>3</sup>NCLEX-RN examinations consist of 75 to 265 items.

<sup>4</sup>The standard amount of allotted testing time for the NCLEX-RN examination is six hours.

The table consists of a grid with 13 columns and 25 rows. The top row is a solid black bar. The second row is a header row with 13 empty cells. The remaining 23 rows are data rows, each with 13 cells. The rows alternate between being shaded gray and unshaded white, starting with a shaded row. The grid is empty of data.

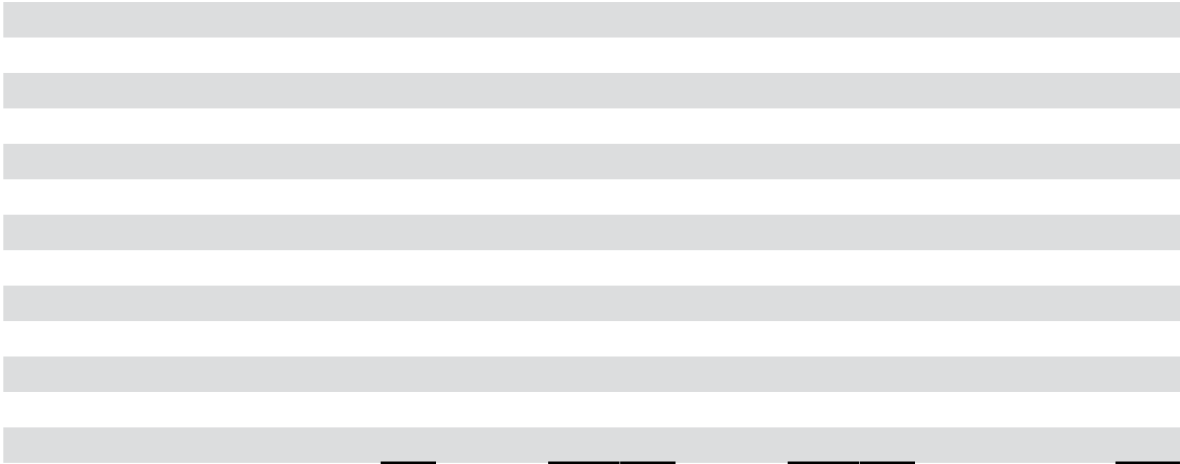
Table 3. Female, U.S.-Educated Candidates







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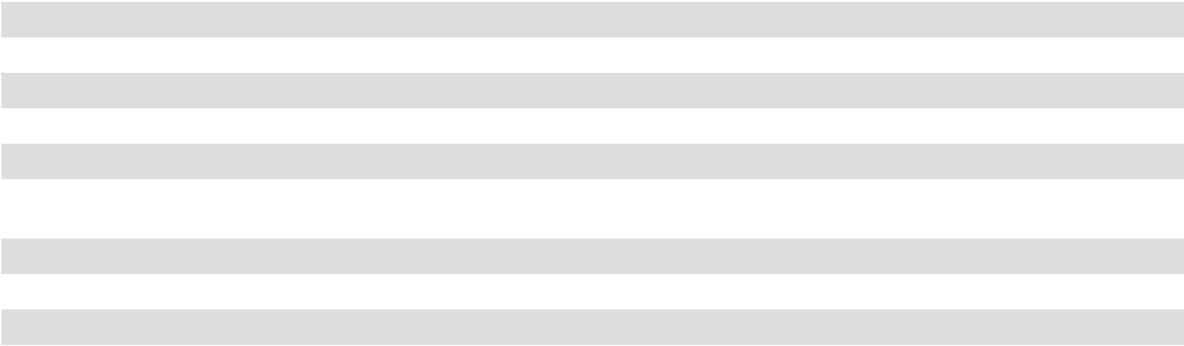
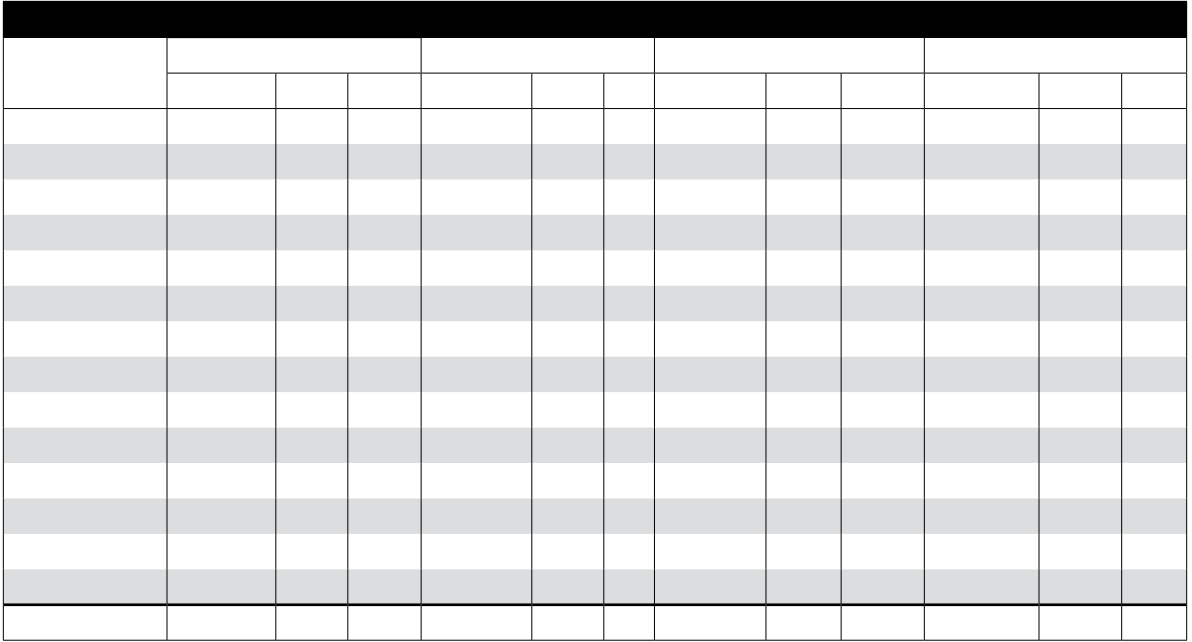




Table 6. Registered U.S.-Educated Candidates Taking the NCLEX-RN Examination, by Degree Type (October 1 - Dec. 31, 2008)<sup>1</sup>

Jurisdiction	RN-Diploma			RN-Associate Degree			RN-Baccalaureate Degree			Total October 1 - Dec. 31, 2008		
	Candidates	Passed	%	Candidates	Passed	%	Candidates	Passed	%	Candidates	Passed	%
Alabama	0			118	88	74.6	75	64	85.3	193	152	78.8
Alaska	0			3	2	66.7	31	25	80.7	34	27	79.4
American Samoa	0			0			0			0		
Arizona	0			166	143	86.1	66	49	74.2	232	192	82.8
Arkansas	1			93	86	92.5	28	20	71.4	122	106	86.9
California-RN	0			458	363	79.3	276	234	84.8	734	597	81.3
Colorado	0			75	62	82.7	98	85	86.7	173	147	85.0
Connecticut	6	5	83.3	49	41	83.7	37	35	94.6	92	81	88.0
Delaware	0			16	15	93.8	8	5	62.5	24	20	83.3
District of Columbia	0			22	18	81.8	8	4	50.0	30	22	73.3
Florida	0			807	621	77.0	220	191	86.8	1,027	812	79.1
Georgia-RN	0			52	41	78.9	78	68	87.2	130	109	83.8
Guam	0			11	8	72.7	13	9	69.2	24	17	70.8
Hawaii	0			6	6	100.0	45	34	75.6	51	40	78.4
Idaho	0			45	32	71.1	9	9	100.0	54	41	75.9
Illinois	0			108	91	84.3	42	29	69.1	150	120	80.0
Indiana	8	6	75.0	90	56	62.2	66	61	92.4	164	123	75.0
Iowa	0			128	93	72.7	16	9	56.3	144	102	70.8
Kansas	0			67	62	92.5	71	64	90.1	138	126	91.3
Kentucky	0			122	97	79.5	38	33	86.8	160	130	81.3
Louisiana-RN	0			75	67	89.3	122	111	91.0	197	178	90.4
Maine	0			4	3	75.0	34	32	94.1	38	35	92.1
Maryland	0			37	33	89.2	32	20	62.5	69	53	76.8
Massachusetts	0			69	50	72.5	37	28	75.7	106	78	73.6
Michigan	0			223	168	75.3	192	167	87.0	415	335	80.7
Minnesota	0			52	37	71.2	14	11	78.6	66	48	72.7
Mississippi	0			53	36	67.9	16	14	87.5	69	50	72.5
Missouri	18	18	100.0	103	74	71.8	109	90	82.6	230	182	79.1
Montana	0			8	7	87.5	3	3	100.0	11	10	90.9
Nebraska	0			32	29	90.6	16	15	93.8	48	44	91.7
Nevada	0			32	26	81.3	73	63	86.3	105	89	84.8
New Hampshire	0			10	7	70.0	3	0	0.0	13	7	53.8
New Jersey	27	20	74.1	46	32	69.6	183	148	80.9	256	200	78.1
New Mexico	0			112	74	66.1	81	62	76.5	193	136	70.5
New York	1	1	100.0	856	692	80.8	361	249	69.0	1,218	942	77.3
North Carolina	2	2	100.0	39	29	74.4	36	30	83.3	77	61	79.2
North Dakota	0			2	2	100.0	40	34	85.0	42	36	85.7
Northern Mariana Islands	0			6	3	50.0	0			6	3	50.0
Ohio	15	12	80.0	534	414	77.5	271	215	79.3	820	641	78.2
Oklahoma	0			57	37	64.9	54	43	79.6	111	80	72.1
Oregon	0			25	22	88.0	33	31	93.9	58	53	91.4





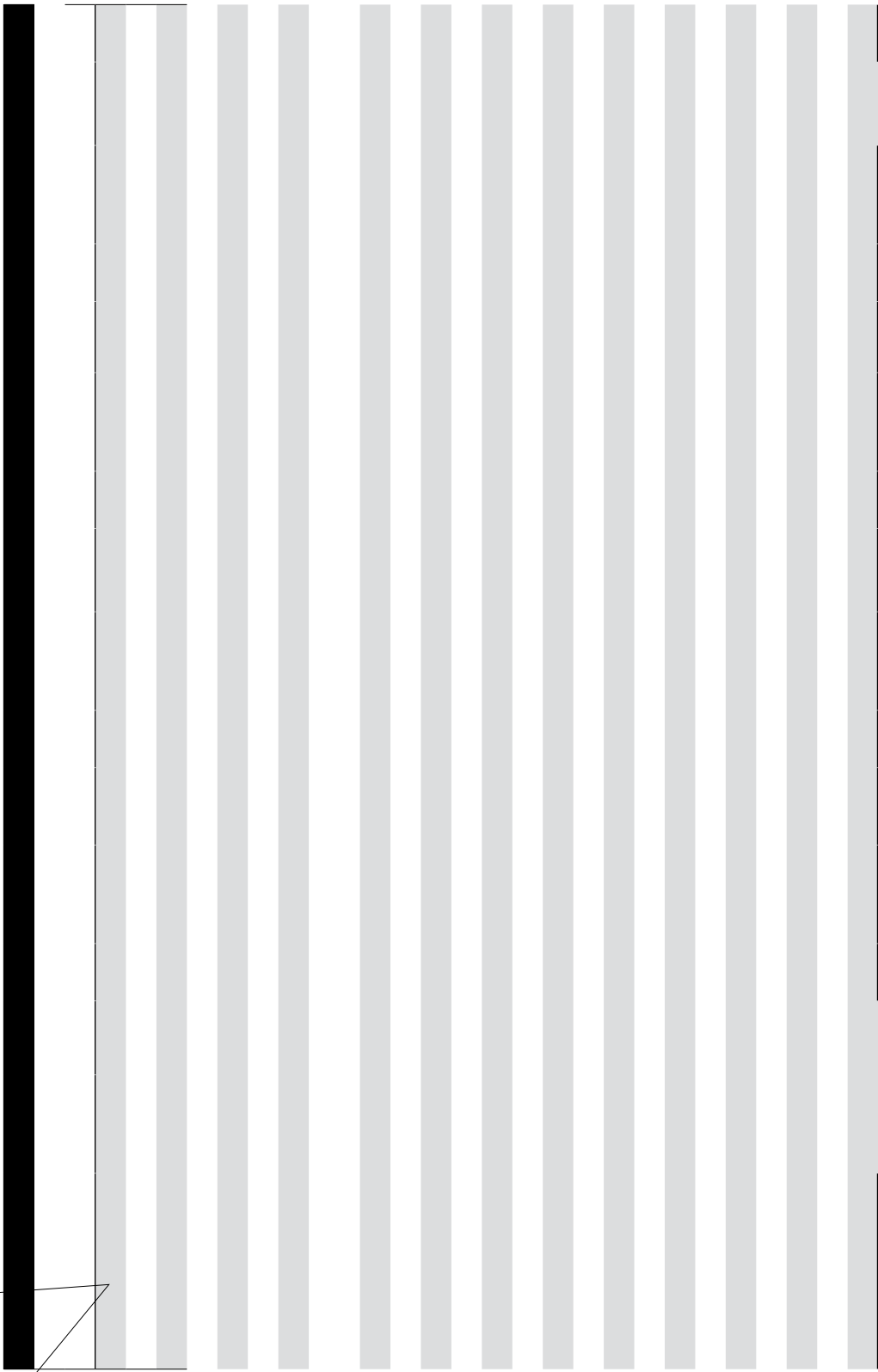

















Figure 2. NCLEX-RN Pass Rates by Administration Year

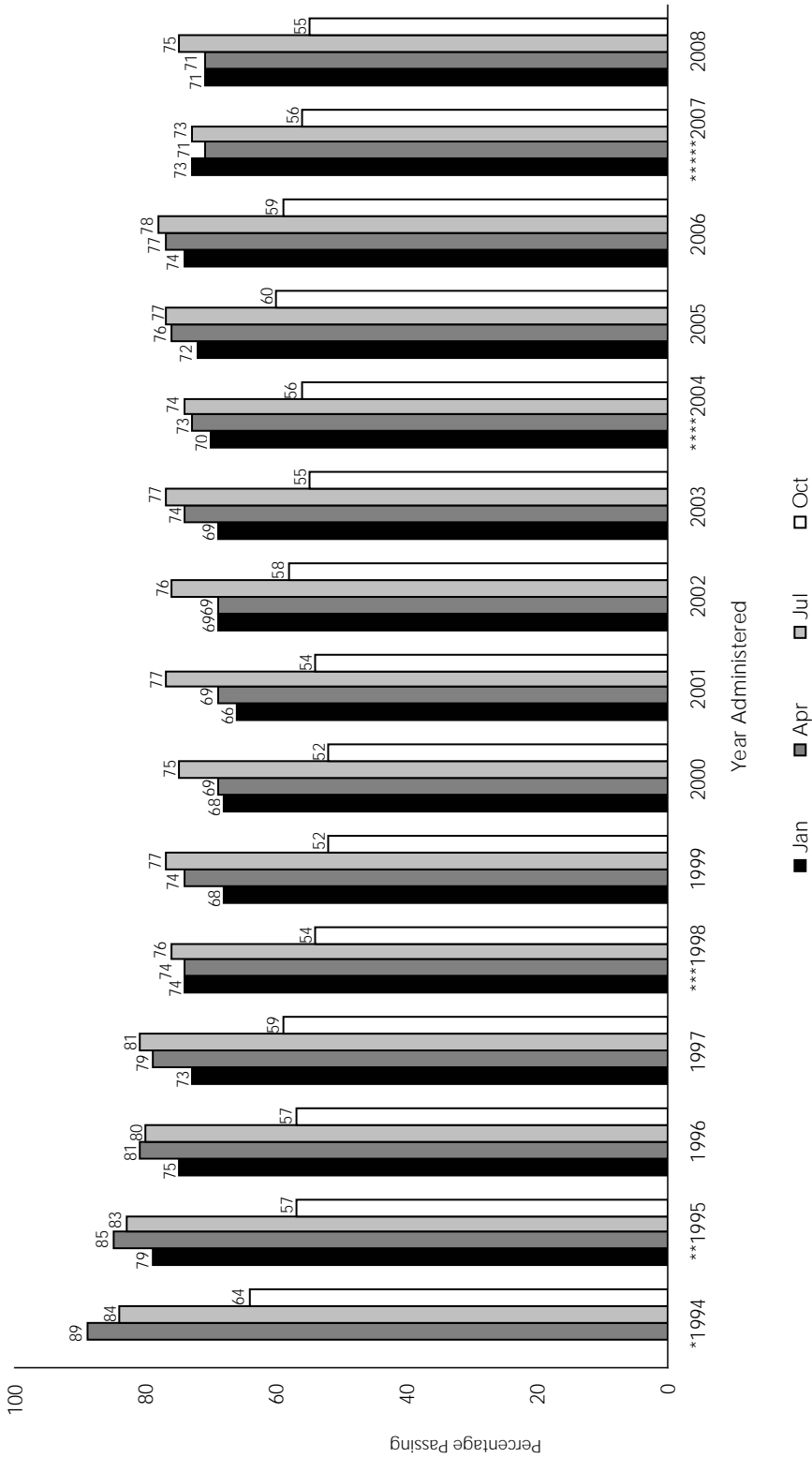




Figure 4. NCLEX-RN Volume, U.S.-Educated Candidates

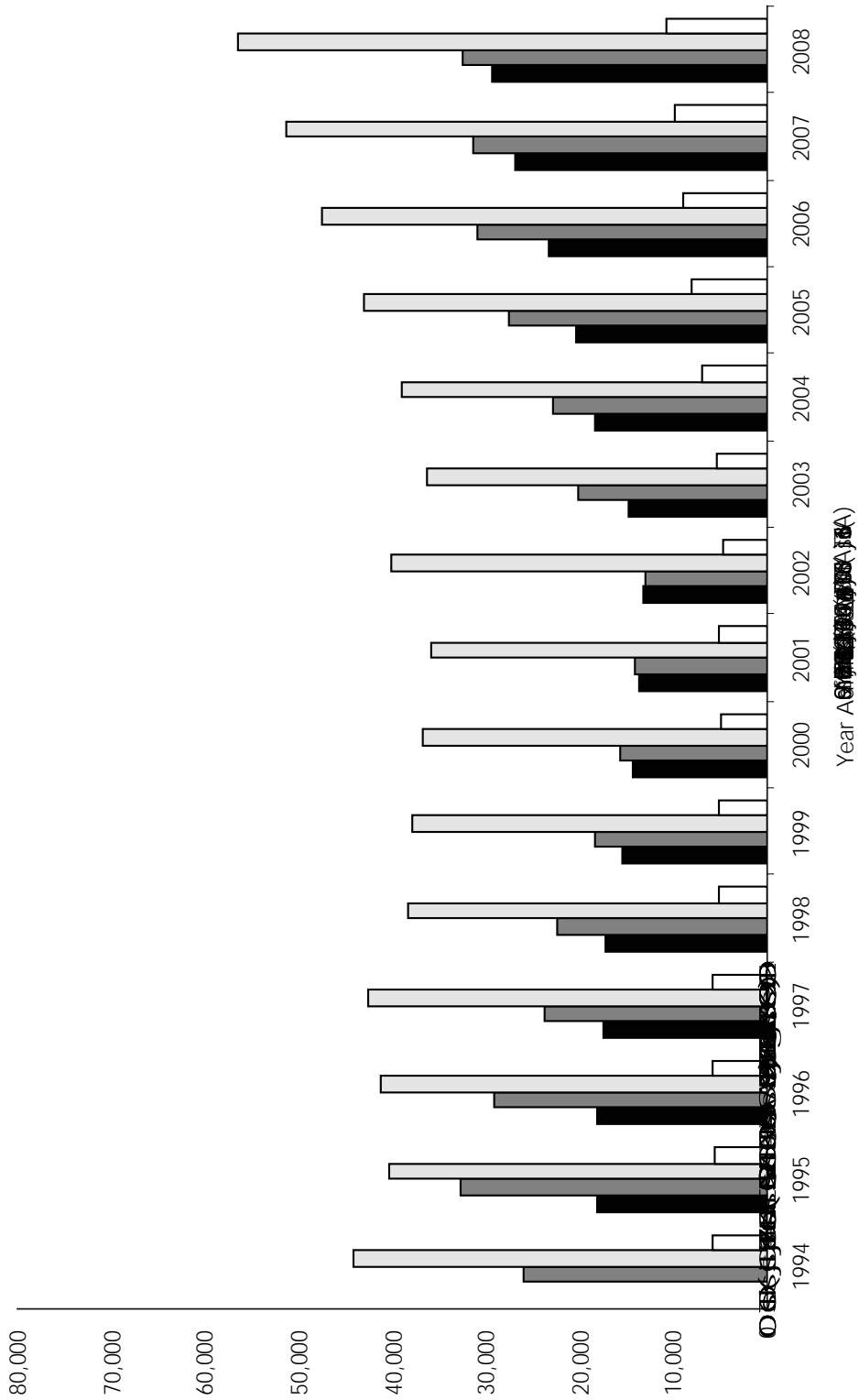






Figure 6. NCLEX-RN Administration, 1994-2008

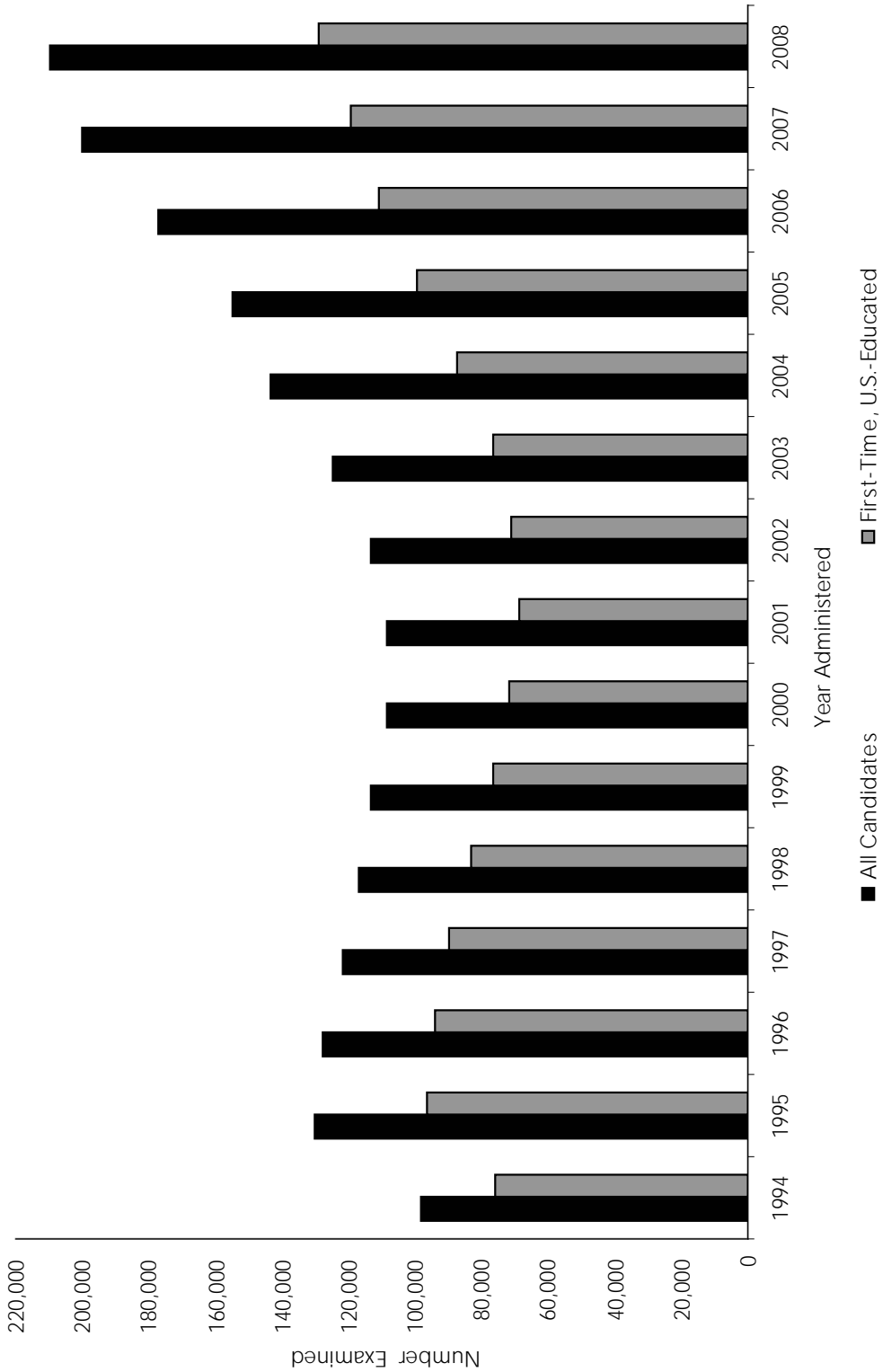


Table 9. Candidate Characteristics by Test Date (January 1 - Dec. 31, 2008)

Test Date	Jan. 1 - Mar. 31, 2008			Apr. 1 - June 30, 2008			July 1 - Sept. 30, 2008			Oct. 1 - Dec. 31, 2008			Total Jan. 1 - Dec. 31, 2008		
	Candidates	Passed	%	Candidates	Passed	%	Candidates	Passed	%	Candidates	Passed	%	Candidates	Passed	%
First-Time, U.S.-Educated	14,429	12,324	85.4	11,376	9,578	84.2	22,506	19,865	88.3	13,459	11,121	82.6	61,770	52,888	85.6
Repeat, U.S.-Educated	2,891	1,276	44.1	3,232	1,279	39.6	3,194	1,277	40.0	3,554	1,489	41.9	12,871	5,321	41.3
First-Time, Internationally Educated	345	168	48.7	462	193	41.8	405	183	45.2	406	174	42.9	1,618	718	44.4
Repeat, Internationally Educated	382	91	23.8	383	84	21.9	392	90	23.0	420					







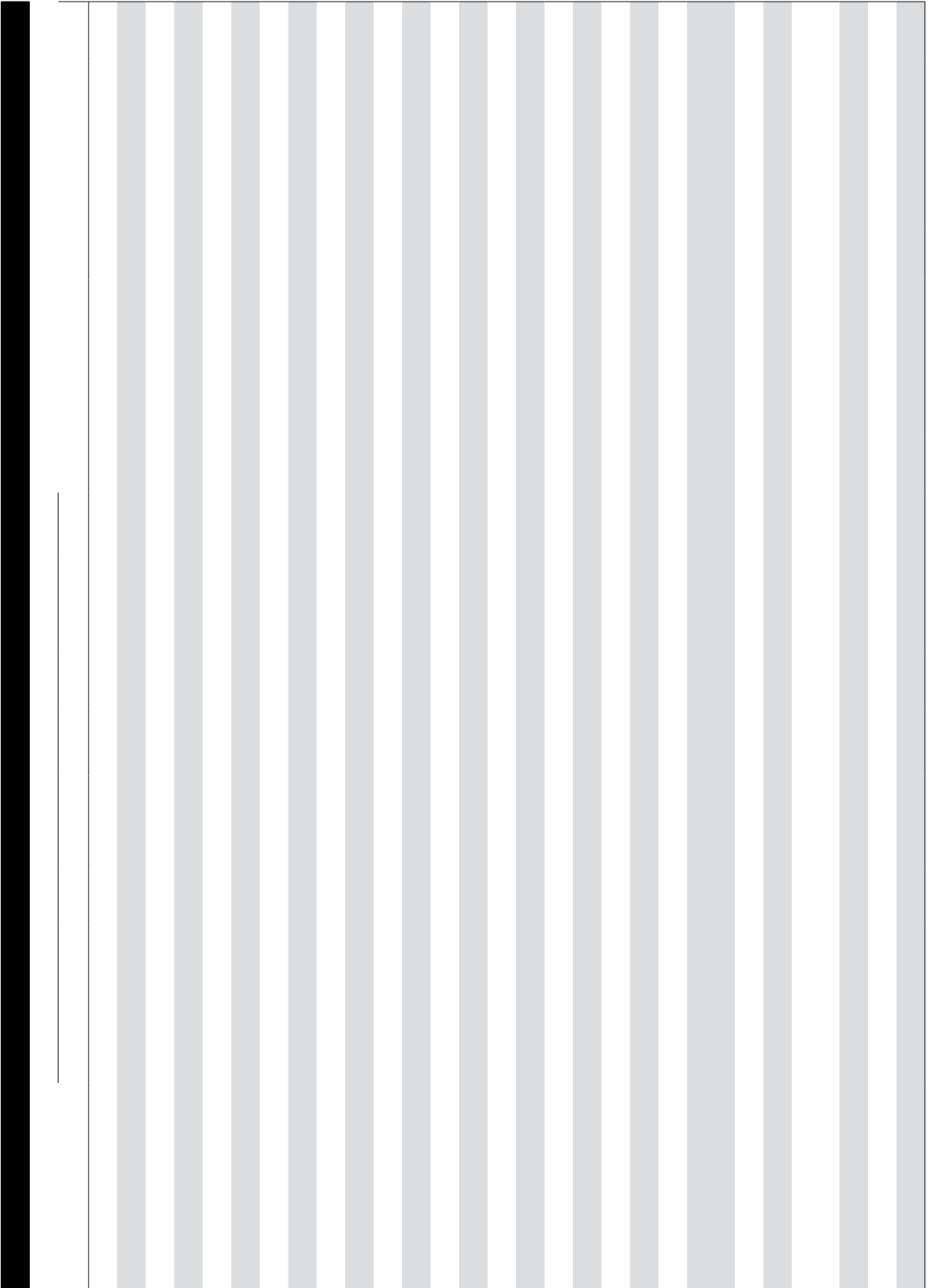











Figure 10. NCLEX-PN Vantage, U.S. Education Calendar

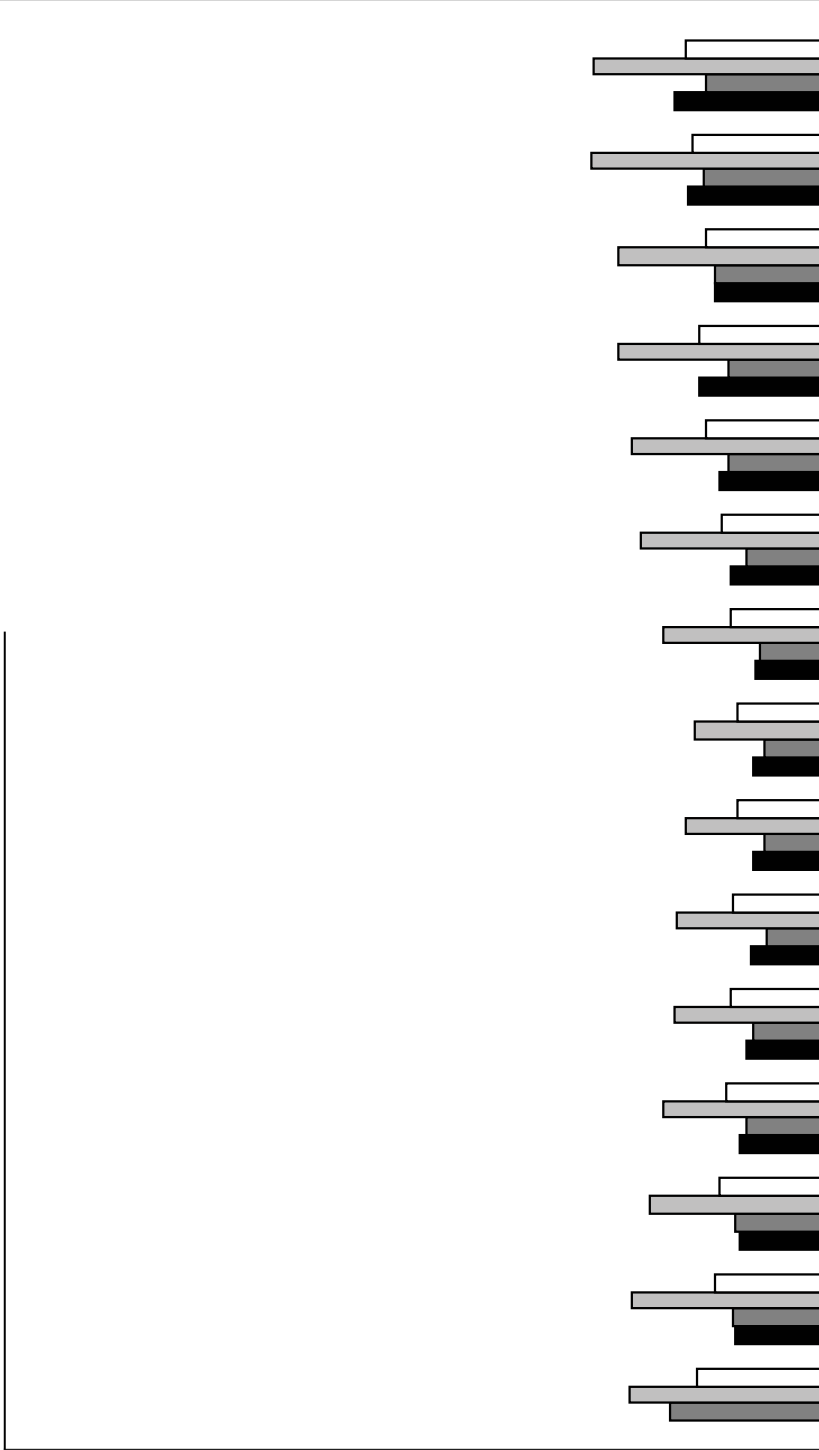


Figure 11. NCLEX-PN V 1.0. A Candidate

