Introduction: The College of Nursing offers an accredited curriculum for RN to BSN students. Yet, attrition remains a problem for returning RN to BSN students. Why do RNs seek a professional degree only to then not succeed in acquiring it? The faculty in the RN to BSN program surveyed the next cohort of RN to BSN students to better understand the future student population to evaluate program design and course needs of the RN to BSN program.

Method(s): Methodology: This study is a general survey of approximately 10,500 RNs in eleven southeastern North Carolina counties. A twenty-five item response questionnaire for the potential cohort was provided. Four hundred and eight RNs replied. Demographic information and a detailed literature review was provided on the adult nursing learner. Viewing the survey through Roy’s Adaptation model allowed the data to be seen as stimuli which could impact the environment of the student. Using findings from the literature to make connections between identified best practices to enhance student adaptation by controlling stimuli and comparing the
survey data for possible identified contextual or residual stimuli, revealed possible vulnerabilities that the RN to BSN educator should plan for in designing curriculum or online courses.

**Results:** Faculty will be asked to assume more roles as the adviser, mentor, educator, tutor and coach. Strategies are needed to protect faculty from workload excess, so they can meet these needs. The use of new technologies should be utilized to increase student participation and interaction. Strategies to manage faculty workload and to prioritize the ability to provide feedback must be accomplished to avoid dissatisfaction and low self-esteem in students which could lead to increased attrition.

**Discussion & Conclusions:** Faculty who teach in online RN to BSN programs must be committed to the roles of educator, tutor, mentor and coach in order to assist the older adult learner in successful completion of the program. Further inquiry must occur to inform educators of the best practices to increase the numbers of BSN prepared nurses.

**Abstract History:**
This abstract has not been presented or accepted for presentation in whole or in part at the SNRS or other scientific meeting.

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