

# A Comparison of Traditional and Non-Traditional Pre-Entry Pathways on Academic Outcomes for Practical Nursing Students

Presenter:

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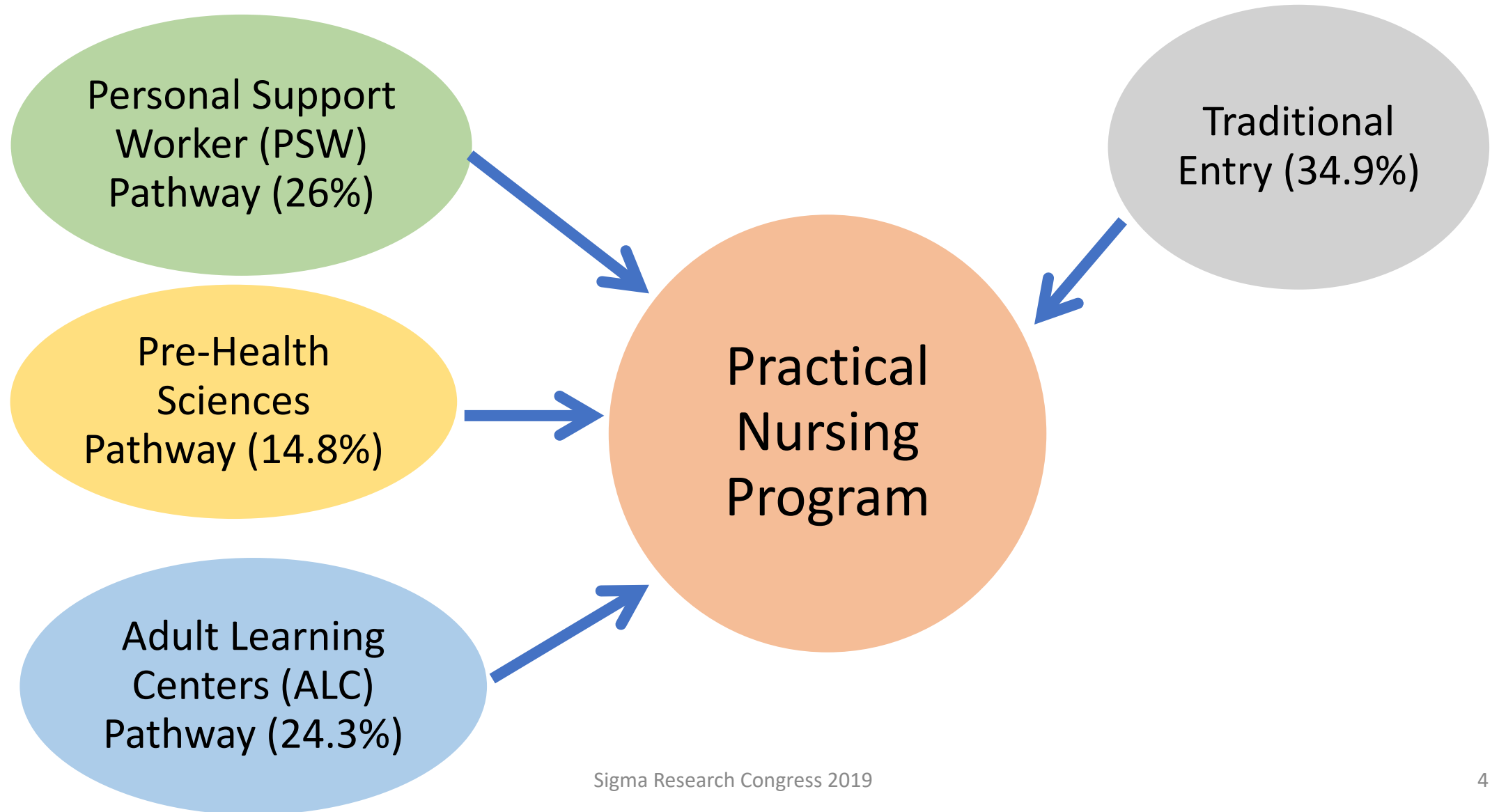
# Disclosure

- Author: Paula Crawford-Dickinson
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# Introduction

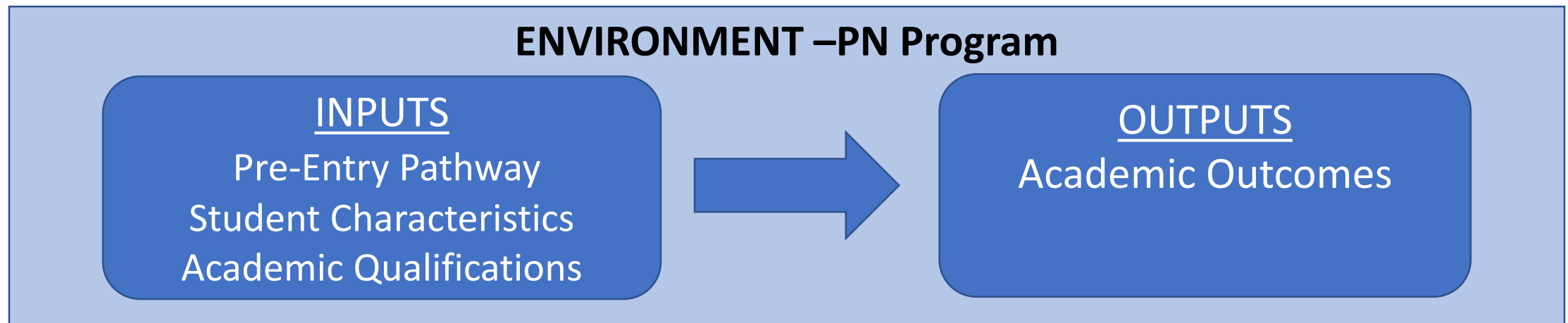
- Students are entering nursing programs through a variety of methods
- Non-traditional pre-entry pathways are emerging to increase access to education and facilitate greater student mobility
- There are no studies on pre-entry routes into Practical Nursing (PN) programs and an overall lack of studies on PN education
- Academic outcomes are affected by: academic factors, student characteristics, and student experiences

# Pre-Entry Pathways into a PN Program - Background



# Study Overview

- Objective: To evaluate and compare academic outcomes of traditional and non-traditional pre-entry pathways for students enrolled in a PN program
- Simplified study conceptual model:



# Methods

- Design: Observational retrospective cross-sectional study
- Setting: Single site of a large urban community college in Ontario
- Sample: 338 full-time students entering the PN program during the 2013-2014 academic year
- Data: Extracted from Registrar's Office academic records in 2017
- Data analysis using SPSS software
- IRB approval received

# Findings - Demographics & Qualifications

VARIABLE	RESULTS
Age	<p><i>M</i> = 28.8 years; <i>Range</i> = 17-55 y  <i>Lowest</i>: <i>M</i> = 25.6 y (Pre-Health)                      Traditional: <i>M</i> = 27.42 y  <i>Highest</i>: <i>M</i> = 31.1 y (PSW)</p>
Gender	<p>Female: <i>M</i> = 84.9%; Male: <i>M</i> = 15.1%                      Similar for all pathways except ALC (Female 89%; Male 11%)</p>
OSSD Completion (high school)	<p><i>M</i> = 58.6%  <i>Lowest</i>: <i>M</i> = 76.15% (PSW)                      Traditional: <i>M</i> = 65.3%  <i>Highest</i>: <i>M</i> = 84% (Pre-Health)</p>
Pre-Admission Score (based on Registrar's Office formula )	<p><i>Mdn</i> = 90.08  <i>Lowest</i>: <i>M</i> = 76.15 (PSW)  <i>Highest</i>: <i>M</i> = 97.1 (Traditional)</p>

# Study Findings - Academic Outcomes

VARIABLE	RESULTS
Program Completion (Graduated)	<p><i>M</i> = 55.9%</p> <p><i>Lowest</i>: 42.9% (Traditional)</p> <p><i>Highest</i>: 59.1-60% (All non-traditional pathways)</p>
GPA (4.0 scale)	<p><i>M</i> = 3.09</p> <p>Similar for all pathways</p>
Number of Semesters Enrolled	<p><i>M</i> = 3.65; <i>Range</i> = 1-7 ; 20.4% completed just 1 semester</p> <p><i>Lowest</i>: <i>M</i> = 3.2; 34.7% completed just 1 semester (Traditional)</p> <p><i>Highest</i>: <i>M</i> = 4.09; 9.8% completed just 1 semester (ALC)</p>
Number of Course Failures	<p><i>M</i> = 1.58, 42.9% had no failures</p> <p><i>Lowest</i>: <i>M</i> = 1.34 &amp; 50% had no failures (Pre-Health)</p> <p><i>Highest</i>: <i>M</i> = 2.5 (Traditional)</p>



# Study Findings - Hypothesis Tests

- Pathways Comparison:
  - No significant differences or associations found for program completion ( $p = .337$ ), GPA ( $p = .063$ ), number of course failures ( $p = .586$ ), and subject area failures ( $p > .05$  for all)
- Program Completion:
  - Differences were found between those who completed the program and those who did not for number of semesters enrolled, number of failures and subject area failures ( $p < .05$  for all)
  - No significant association for OSSD (high school) completion ( $p = .324$ ) and gender ( $p = .622$ )

# Limitations

- Retrospective data
- Reliance on an existing database
- Single site limits generalizability
- Factors may influence results beyond those available for study (i.e. family status, employment)

# Recommendations

- Further study of pre-entry pathways, PN education and PN student characteristics is needed
- Investigate student perceptions on how well pre-entry pathways prepared them for the PN program
- Specific to host site:
  - Revisit admission criteria and preadmission scoring formula
  - Tailor student supports to population needs
  - Improve collaboration between pre-entry sites and PN program
  - Consider developing a specific pre-nursing pathway

# Conclusion

- Academic outcomes did not differ between traditional, and non-traditional pre-entry pathways
- Pre-Entry pathways are a novel method of program entry that promote greater access to education for more diverse learners
- Strong partnerships and carefully designed curricula are key in preparing students for success in subsequent programs