Perceptions Regarding the Effect of Doctoral Teaching on Faculty Ability to Maintain a Program of Scholarship
Research Team:

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Support:

- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Evaluating Innovations in Nursing Education Grant
Context: 2010 IOM Report

- Called for an increase in the proportion of BSN-prepared nurses in the US to 80% by 2020
- Called for increased production of advanced practice nurses
- Called for doubling the population of doctorally prepared nurses by 2020
- Schools’ responses to these recommendations are increasing the demand on nursing faculty as they attempt to be more productive in teaching and carry out the discipline’s scientific mission
Purpose of this study:

- As part of a larger study of how the demand for increased production of doctorally prepared nurses affects their scholarly productivity, this focus group study was conducted to identify the domains that need to be examined to address the question.
Background

- Current and anticipated shortage of nurses
- Current faculty shortage
- Age of the nation’s nursing faculty
- For faculty appointment, promotion and tenure, a doctoral degree is required
- Scientific evidence for quality and cost-effective nursing practice is an urgent need of the discipline
- In 2011 there were 601 graduates of research focused doctoral programs and 1595 graduates of practice focused doctoral programs
- From 2006 to 2011 the number of DNP programs grew from 20 to 184 programs with 101 more in planning stages; currently 9094 students enrolled
- From 2003 to 2011 52% increase in enrollment in now 125 research-focused programs
Graduates of clinically focused programs:

- In relation to their roles in academia there are few outcome data available at this time
Graduates of research-focused programs:

- Are prepared to conduct research
- Just 40% are in academic positions after degree completion
- Are likely to become employed in institutions that are not research intensive thus may provide lower levels of support for research than the schools in which they were prepared
- May experience very different expectations than they anticipated
The academic role:

- Teaching, research, service are the traditional expectations of faculty
- Professional practice is expected of faculty with clinically focused doctorates
- Senior faculty need to mentor newer faculty
- Benefits include:
  - Shaping the profession through teaching
  - Engagement in intellectual dialogue with students and colleagues
  - Improvement of health care through teaching and research
  - The opportunity to provide leadership
The challenges:

- Contraction of resources has led to heavier teaching loads and greater competition for research funds.
- The aging of the faculty means that fewer senior faculty are available to mentor doctoral students and junior faculty and serve in leadership roles in their institutions.
- Clinical doctorate faculty must maintain their credentials through practice while meeting the demands of their academic position.
Design of the study:

- IRB approval obtained
- Focus groups conducted at a national research conference and a national DNP faculty conference
- Transcription of data
- Review of transcripts with original recordings
- Content analysis by three team members
- Consensus meetings including all team members
Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Focus Group Participants (N=29; not all participants provided demographic data)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>PhD</th>
<th>DNP</th>
<th>EdD</th>
<th>DNS</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 60</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>47.8%</td>
<td>43.5%</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>65.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of doctoral degree held (23)</th>
<th>Teach in type of doctoral program</th>
<th>Years in teaching current program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>M 13.27 ± 8.27 (4 – 30 yrs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DNP</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>M 4.0 ± 3.27 (1 – 15 yrs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EdD</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>45.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DNS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>75.0%*** obviously some do both</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>DNP</td>
<td>M 4.0 ± 3.27 (1 – 15 yrs)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years in teaching current program</th>
<th>PhD Program Faculty (n = 11)</th>
<th>DNP Program Faculty (n = 17)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M 13.27 ± 8.27 (4 – 30 yrs)</td>
<td>M 4.0 ± 3.27 (1 – 15 yrs)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Themes

1. Demands of teaching
   - Quantity / nature of “invisible” work
     - Increasing workload of on-line courses
     - Increased use of learner-centered strategies
     - Teaching across programs
     - Mentorship of doctoral students is 1:1
     - DNP projects require rapid development and implementation
     - Preparation of new courses for new programs
   - Faster rhythm of academic life in recent years
Themes, continued

2. Importance of institutional structure and climate
   - Mission of institution
   - Boundary-setting re: institutional and SON structure / climate
   - Role differences between junior and senior or clinical and tenure-track/tenured faculty
Themes, continued

3. Sustainability of self, institution, discipline
   - Costs/benefits of teaching doctoral students
   - Work-life balance
   - Spiritual wellbeing
   - Characteristics of unsuccessful faculty
   - Characteristics / strategies related to success
   - Scholarship and disciplinary stewardship
Implications

- Institutions need to be attentive to issues of workload to ensure ability to recruit and retain faculty
- Schools of nursing need to plan thoughtful strategies to help faculty clarify and focus on fulfillment of their roles
- School administrators and senior faculty need to continually articulate disciplinary expectations to the broader institution
Conclusion

- Further research is needed to understand how these issues affect the scholarly productivity of doctoral faculty
- The next phase of the larger project entails a national survey of deans, doctoral program directors and doctoral faculty to further elucidate these issues
Questions?
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