Reflections on the Future of Doctoral Programs in Nursing

Jane Marie Kirschling, PhD, RN, FAAN
Dean and Professor, University of Maryland School of Nursing and AACN President

Objectives

- Provide snapshot of research and practice doctoral program growth, including numbers of program, students, and graduates
- Describe AACN’s position on preparation for the faculty role within the context of doctoral education
- Describe rationale for AACN Board decision to host the DNP and PhD National Summits in 2013
Provide Overview and recommendations from DNP National Summit – Dr. Rita Frantz

• Provide charge and timeframe for the work of the AACN Task Force on Implementation of DNP

Provide overview and recommendations from PhD National Summit – Dr. Margaret Grey
A Look at the Numbers

- Latest AACN survey findings – from Fall 2013 – are based on:
  - 90% response rate from all SONs
  - 97% response rate from member schools

- According to AACN’s annual survey, interest in doctoral nursing education remains strong
  - PhD enrollments up 49% since 2004
  - DNP enrollments up 21.6% from 2012 to 2013
Enrollments and Graduations in DNP Programs: 2004-2013
Enrollments and Graduations in PhD/DNS Programs: 2004-2013

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Enrollments in Both DNP and PhD Programs: 2004-2013

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AACN’s Preferred Vision of the Professoriate in Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Programs (March, 2008) – “Consistent with academy expectations, faculty with primary responsibility for the oversight of courses in baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral nursing programs will have doctoral preparation. Doctoral graduates who will be involved in an academic role will have preparation in educational methods and pedagogies.”
“In some instances, individuals who acquire the DNP or PhD will seek to fill roles as educators and will use their considerable expertise to educate the next generation of nurses. As in other disciplines (e.g., engineering, business, chemistry, law), the major focus of the educational program must be on the area of practice specialization within the discipline, not the process of teaching. However, individuals who desire a role as an educator, whether that role is operationalized in a practice setting or the academy, should have additional preparation in the science of pedagogy to augment their ability to transmit the science of the profession they practice and teach. This additional preparation may occur in formal course work during the DNP or PhD program.”
AACN Board Decision – National DNP Summit

- Host *National Dialogue on Quality and Excellence in DNP Education* as follow-up to meeting held August 2012 by nursing deans affiliated with Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC)
  - August meeting highlighted progress to date as well as need for ongoing dialogue as DNP movement unfolds over next decade
- DNP Summit April 15-16, 2013 in Chicago
AACN Board Decision

- 2013 Summer Board Meeting
  - *New task force formed on Implementation of the DNP* - will issue white paper to clarify expectations around scholarly projects and practice requirements in DNP programs
Task Force Members

- Sarah Thompson, University of Colorado (Chair)
- Catherine Hill, Texas Health Physicians Group
- Shannon Reedy Idzik, University of Maryland
- Marie Napolitano, University of Portland
- Mary F. Rodts, Rush University
- William Michael Scott, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center
- Kimberly A. Udlis, Bellin College
- Teresa Wehrwein, Michigan State University
AACN Board Decisions

- 2013 Summer Board Meeting - strategic decisions impacting future directions of AACN
  - Commissioned a national study to uncover barriers and facilitators for schools transitioning their master’s level APRN programs to DNP
  - RFP issued in August 2013, RAND selected
  - Survey work initiated December 2013
  - Final report due April 2014
AACN Board Decision

  - More than 240 stakeholders attended representing 85% of all existing and planned PhD in nursing programs
  - Findings are being explored at this AACN Doctoral Conference
Questions Taken at End of Panel
REFLECTIONS ON THE FUTURE OF DOCTORAL PROGRAMS IN NURSING: DNP

Rita A. Frantz PhD, RN, FAAN
Kelting Dean & Professor, University of Iowa College of Nursing and Chair, AACN Summit Planning Committee
DNP Summit: Purpose

- Explore
  - Program outcomes
  - Program plans of study
  - Clinical practica
  - Scholarly projects
  - Do DNP Essentials need revision?
State of DNP Programs

- Wide variation across programs
  - Post-master’s and post-baccalaureate
  - Number of required courses
  - Multiple distinctive program foci
  - Graduates assume differing roles
  - Impact on practice
  - Final projects differ widely
Areas of Agreement

- Practice doctorate degree in nursing important to advancement of discipline
- DNP intended to enhance advanced practice roles to prepare experts in population-based practice, leadership and policy
Areas of Discussion

- Intent of DNP and expected competencies
- Clinical/practice experiences
- Final Project (Capstone)
Do DNP Essentials Need Revision?

- Maintain DNP Essentials
- Clarification needed
  - Essential IV – broaden to include self-care management (e.g., telehealth and web-based apps)
  - Essential VIII – too focused on direct care roles; broaden to include Nurse Executive, Community Health, others
Recommendations from Summit

- Address implementation issues
  - Clarify what roles DNP graduates expected to fulfill
  - Clarify clinical practice requirements
  - Clarify purpose of DNP Final Project
AACN Response to Summit

- Established Task Force on Implementation of the DNP
- Task Force Charge
  - Develop white paper that clarifies
    - Purpose of DNP final scholarly product
    - Clinical learning/practice hour requirements as described in DNP Essentials
AACN Response to Summit

- Areas to be addressed by Task Force
  - Current state of DNP scholarly products
  - Resources needed to support development of quality DNP products
  - Recommendations for scholarship of DNP graduates
  - Identify term to be used for DNP scholarly product
Areas to be addressed by Task Force

- Develop recommendations and exemplars for DNP scholarly products
- Evaluate current state of program length in context of post-baccalaureate and post-master’s programs
- Clarify purpose of DNP practice and requirements examine current challenges for meeting practice hours
AACN Response to Summit

- Areas to be addressed by Task Force
  - Describe nature of collaborative relationship that should be established to facilitate development of DNP students
  - Formulate recommendations for integrative and collaborative DNP practice experiences that meet DNP Essentials
  - Highlight exemplary opportunities and innovations for intra (DNP & PhD) and inter-professional learning and practice

- Task force will begin working this month and will provide Board of Directors their report by June 2015
Summit Planning Committee

- Debra Barksdale, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- Judith Halstead, Indiana University
- Kenneth Miller, Catholic University of America
- Juliann Sebastian, University of Nebraska Medical Center
- Kimberly Udlis, Bellin College
- Tracy Williams, Norton Healthcare
- Nancy Fugate Woods, University of Washington
- Carolyn Yucha, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
AACN SUMMIT ON THE RESEARCH-FOCUSED DOCTORATE

Margaret Grey, DrPH, RN, FAAN
Dean and Annie Goodrich Professor, Yale University School of Nursing and Chair, Summit Planning Committee
Purpose

- To bring people from research-focused doctoral programs together to dialogue about future science and PhD education.
Key Questions

- Discuss the current state of health science and the direction it needs to take for future sustainability
- Discuss the knowledge and skills faculty will need to develop PhD programs of the future
- What are the barriers to moving research-focused doctoral education to what it should be?
- What are the facilitators of achieving this vision?
Where is Science Going?

- Study of the brain – dementia
- Basic research – genetics
- Big data
- Public health priorities
- Teams and team science
Faculty & Program Characteristics

- Faculty with active research agenda and matched to students
- Familiarity with new methods – pragmatic trials, CBPR, basic science
- Ability to mentor
- Ability to support student scholarship
- Clarity of research focus
Barriers

- Money to support students in full-time study
- Faculty with strong programs of research
- Length of full-time programs, followed by postdoctoral training
- Enhancing research environments
- Questions about discrimination between the PhD and the DNP capabilities
Position Statement on the Research-Focused Doctoral

- Assumed outcomes
  - Development of the science
  - Steward the discipline
  - Educate the next generation of scientists

- Still relevant

- Can be used for schools to evaluate their own programs and determine needs
Next Steps

- Use position statement for program self-evaluation
- Need data on outcomes
- Truth in advertising
- Continued development of faculty as mentors for PhD study
- Expand socialization of students as life-long scholars
More Next Steps

- Raise our standards to compete with other disciplines
- Embrace inter-disciplinarity
- Encourage alternatives to the traditional dissertation – 3 paper option
- Enhance resources to help programs develop
Controversies

- Is the PhD a science degree?
  - NRC classification
- Is the time to the PhD in Nursing too long or too short?
- Whither educational research?
- What about international students who may not do research when they return home?
- Are postdoctoral fellowships necessary?
Next Step

- AACN Board considering whether to host a follow-up meeting to begin to address these issues
Summit Planning Committee

- Azita Emami, University of Washington
- Mary Kerr, Case Western Reserve
- Terry Lennie, University of Kentucky
- Alexa Stuifbergen, University of Texas at Austin
- Connie Ulrich, University of Pennsylvania
- David Vlahov, University of California San Francisco
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