

EMBEDDING INNOVATION AND ACADEMIC RIGOR IN DNP PROGRAMS

DONNA VELASQUEZ, PHD, RN, FNP-BC, FAANP
KATHY MALLOCH, PHD, MBA, RN, FAAN
LYNDA ROOT, DNP, RN, PMHCNS, BC

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"Innovation never occurs in isolation or by a single individual-it requires a team of dedicated individuals passionately committed to making a difference"

(Porter-O'Grady & Malloch, 2018, p. 122)

OBJECTIVES:

1. Define academic rigor within the context of innovation.
2. Describe a conceptual model of the innovation trajectory.
3. Describe the process used by one DNP program to embed academic rigor and innovation in the curriculum and DNP projects.

WHO WE ARE: ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY, COLLEGE OF NURSING & HEALTH INNOVATION (CONHI)

- 1970s- Master's with NP tracks
- 2007- Postmaster's DNP
- 2009- BSN to DNP
- 2010
 - CCNE Accreditation
 - Last cohort eligible for "pass-through" Master's
- 2012-Innovation Leadership track
- 2016, 2017, 2018
 - ASU named #1 Innovation



RIGOR: WHAT IS IT?

- **Precision** of thought grounded in evidence
- A **process** which encourages a **sophisticated** understanding of fundamental ideas and then **challenges** thinking in new and interesting ways (Sztabnik, 2015).

RIGOR: THE "SO WHAT"?



DNP Role Performance Trajectory (adapted from Malloch, 2017 with permission)

- "Graduates of both research and practice-focused doctoral programs are prepared to generate new knowledge" (Thompson, Stefaniak, & Scott, 2015)
- Rigor allows level of confidence in findings

RIGOR & INNOVATION FIT

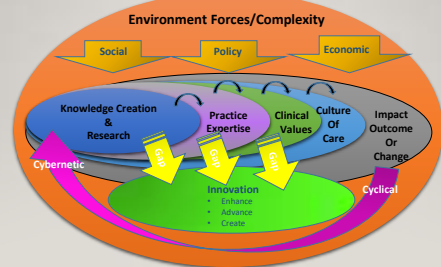
- Innovation- discipline that methodically analyzes areas of opportunity, it is purposeful & focused (Drucker, 1985)
- Innovation is a **rigorous process** that leads to something new (Porter-O'Grady & Malloch, 2018)



RIGOR & INNOVATION

"In innovation as in any other endeavor, there is talent, there is ingenuity, and there is knowledge. But when all is said and done, what innovation requires is hard, focused and purposeful work"

(Drucker, 1985, p. 72)



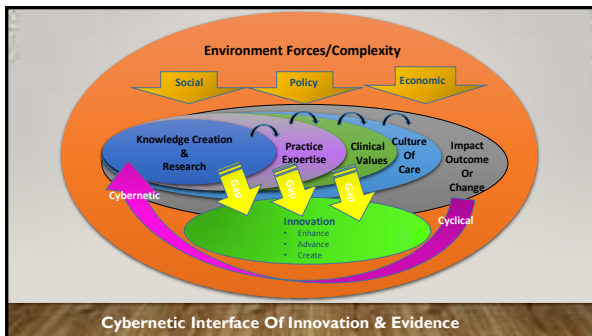
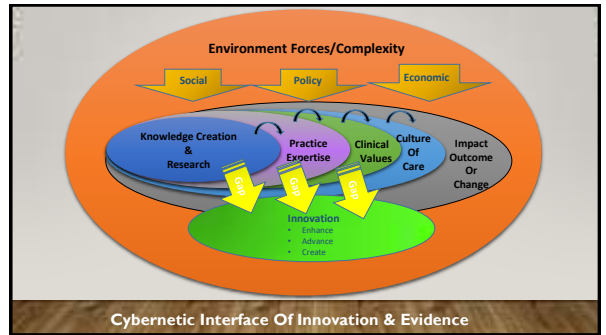
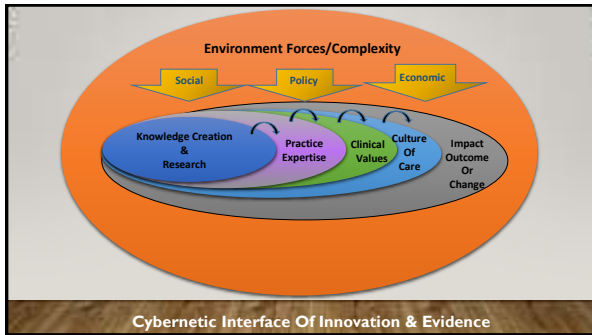
Cybernetic Interface Of Innovation & Evidence (Porter-O'Grady & Malloch)

ASSESSMENT: BACKGROUND THOUGHTS

- New program
- New faculty
- New competencies
- Strong emphasis on Evidence Based Practice at ASU
- Innovation leadership is a core competency for ASU Leadership Programs
- A strong desire to raise the bar of scholarship

ASSUMPTIONS

1. Evidentiary dynamics is the framework for DNP learning and advancement of practice applications.



ASSUMPTIONS

- All DNP projects should lead to the innovation end of the evidence to innovation cybernetic dynamic
- Identify a clear "so-what" of the the DNP project
- The 8 AANC DNP Essentials are the framework for the DNP project

PROCESS:

- Two reviewers
- A template was created based on the assumptions.
- Questionable or marginal DNP projects were evaluated by both reviewers and consensus was reached regarding consistency with the criteria.
- Following all reviews, detailed analysis and discussion of each of the DNP projects and their consistency with the assumptions was used to inform recommendations.

DISCUSSION

35 of 40 (88%) of DNP Projects from most recent cohort of graduates
 5 (13%) were embargoed and not included
 7 (18%) appeared to be at the desired level of quality

Projects demonstrated innovations in practice; however explicit and intentional connections to innovation were not made

DISCUSSION

The PICOT process provided structure and focus in identifying the gaps in evidence

The conceptual integrity and depth was highly variable

A lack of scholarly depth in that there was a lack of scholarly depth of the DNP, the need to fully understand theory, translate it into practice, apply it, and evaluate it for its efficacy and sustainability in the practice environment

DISCUSSION

Many projects represented a master's degree level of work; some projects produced a continuing education level program whose content was process or functionality; some work was basic and demonstrated a simple comparative process or a pre and post-test CE framework

DISCUSSION

Some projects included more than one theoretical model with little integration of the theories; some projects failed to link evidence-based practice exemplars with an health or innovation theory.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Reframe DNP project goals
2. Build on course work from an evidentiary framework
3. Use PICOT to discipline the question being explored
4. Once evidentiary status is established, move to a real innovation or transformation using the innovation model, theory or framework
5. Compare and contrast the differences in masters vs. doctoral level scholarship and outcomes

RECOMMENDATIONS

6. Reinforce the AACN DNP essentials—determine what is truly represented in the DNP program specifics and what is missing and each student's compliance and representation of them in their own scholarship and work.
7. Reinforce the linkage of student projects to national initiatives in an attempt to expand the body of knowledge, change, innovation or system transformation.
8. Create a plan to close the distance between current practices and the DNP program and the recommendations herein to strengthen the scholarship of the DNP project, its relevance and the capacity of the graduating DNP students to be agents of innovation/ transformation in their leadership.



"What if we don't change at all —
and something magical just happens?"

CHANGE

- Project Review (summer 2015)
Identification and correction of content gaps
 - **Revise residency to support students progression**
 - **Redefine focus, thread throughout courses**
 - **Provide clarity regarding DNP project expectations**

"Innovation never occurs in isolation or by a single individual- it requires a team of dedicated individuals passionately committed to making a difference".

Assembled small team to make immediate "course corrections"
Expanded DNP Project team to enlarge and develop initial plan
Engaged faculty mentors
DNP Project team → EBP task force

REVISE RESIDENCY

Expand from 3 to 4 Semesters

1- Project development and focused fieldwork

2 - Appraisal of evidence

3- Implementation

4- Analysis and dissemination

REDEFINE FOCUS

Scholarship, Inquiry, Translation and Transformation

Evidence and Innovation (Davidson, Weberg, Porter-O'Grady, & Malloch 2017)

Innovation Leadership (Porter-O'Grady & Malloch, 2018)

PROVIDE CLARITY

- Wide range of Mentor expectations of DNP Project
Mentor education and experience (PhD, DNP)
Part-Time faculty, not teaching in core courses
- A belief that innovation and evidence-based practice are mutually exclusive concepts

NEXT STEPS

- Second Faculty Mentor Workshop: DNP projects: Outcome measurement (4/18)
- Audit 2018 projects (Summer, 2018)
- EBP Task Force (November, 2017)

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

- Varying levels of faculty commitment to DNP
- Limited # of community partners
- Time constraints- competitive program length, workforce needs
- Enrollment and Graduation expectations
- Budget
- Defining “acceptable/non-acceptable” projects

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