



Comparison of Faculty Mentoring Roles between PhD and DNP Programs

Yearwood, E., Anderson, K., McLaughlin, M.,
Fall-Dickson, J.,
Crowell, N., Heitzler, E., White, K. & Kesten, K.



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

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Objective:

Appraise the current mentoring practices of faculty guiding doctoral nursing students during their scholarly project or dissertation.

Evaluated characteristics of faculty, support for and engagement of faculty in mentoring DNP scholarly projects and PhD dissertations

Definition of Mentoring

“A reciprocal relationship in which a more experienced faculty member acts as a guide, role model, teacher and sponsor of a less experienced student or faculty member. The mentor provides knowledge, advice, counsel, challenge and support in the mentee’s pursuit of becoming a full member of a particular profession” (Johnson, p. 23).



Value of Mentoring in Nursing

- Promotes student academic success
- Supports faculty role development
- Basis of role socialization
- Considered a professional responsibility
- Can guide rigor of projects and dissertations

AACN (2010)

The research-focused doctoral program in nursing: Pathways to excellence

Mentoring serves to:

- 1) Advance nursing science
- 2) Communicate findings and move the discipline forward
- 3) Guide engagement in team / interdisciplinary science to address complex and emerging health needs (p. 2)

Comparison by Numbers and Percentage PhD and DNP Graduates (AACN, 2017)

Type of Program	2010	2017
DNP	1,282 (71%)	6,090 (88%)
PhD	532 (29%)	793 (12%)

Methodology

- Researchers developed survey tool with quantitative and open-ended elements
- Tool sent to 9 doctoral faculty from randomly selected AACN schools for review/feedback
- Tool revised
 - ✓ Demographic items specific to respondent
 - ✓ 29 items specific to DNP programs
 - ✓ 23 items specific to PhD programs

Methodology

- Sent to 550 Deans and Program Directors
- 20-30 minutes to complete electronically
- Anonymous and voluntary
- Survey open for total of 17 days; one reminder email sent at day 10



Data Analysis

- Data analyzed using IBM SPSS version 25
- Categorical data analyzed using frequencies and percentages
- N=230 surveys completed, some reflected both programs; DNP only=134; PhD only= 10; both = 43

Sample Demographics

Table 1. Characteristics of the Respondents by Doctoral Program (N=230)

	DNP (all) n = 177	PhD (all) n = 53
	n (%)	n (%)
Current Employment		
Full-time, tenured	82 (46.3)	31 (58.5)
Full-time, tenure track	33 (18.6)	3 (5.7)
Full-time, non-tenure	58 (32.8)	19 (35.8)
Part-time faculty	3 (1.7)	0 (0.0)
Adjunct faculty	1 (0.6)	0 (0.0)
Highest Degree		
PhD	98 (56.0)	44 (83.0)
DNP	63 (36.0)	8 (15.1)
EdD.	9 (5.1)	0 (0.0)
DNSc.	5 (2.9)	1 (1.9)
Current Role		
Committee Chair	72 (41.9)	17 (35.4)
Committee Member	25 (14.5)	6 (12.5)
Both	59 (34.3)	14 (29.2)
Other	16 (9.3)	11 (2.9)

Results

Table 2. Characteristics of the Program and Mentoring by Doctoral Program (N=230)

	DNP (all) n = 177	PhD (all) n = 53
	M (SD)	M (SD)
Years enrolling students	7.5 (4.3)	24.5 (14.5)
Number students currently enrolled	72.2 (72.9)	37.4 (27.7)
Maximum number of projects chaired	5.8 (5.3)	3.8 (4.7)
Maximum number of committee memberships	5.7 (5.6)	5.6 (10.2)
Hours per week spent on mentoring	4.5 (5.1)	7.7 (10.5)
Weeks spent mentoring	40.1 (23.1)	67.0 (49.2)

Results

Table 3. Characteristics of Mentoring and Student Projects (N=230)

	DNP (all) n = 177	PhD (all) n = 53
	n (%)	n (%)
Received formal training for mentoring	38 (21.5)	13 (24.5)
Currently being mentored on being chair	14 (7.9)	2 (3.8)
Chairs must first be committee member	49 (27.7)	30 (56.6)
Compensated for serving as chair	104 (58.5)	24 (45.3)
Being Chair NOT accounted for in workload	70 (39.5)	21 (39.6)
Who can chair project?		
Full-time faculty	165 (93.2)	45 (84.9)
Part-time faculty	75 (42.4)	13 (24.5)
Adjunct faculty	41 (23.2)	3 (5.7)
Retired faculty	20 (11.3)	11 (20.8)

Q34(DNP) & 63(PhD)

What would facilitate your efforts to be a more effective mentor to DNP (PhD) students?

DNP Faculty	PhD Faculty
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. More time to publish DNP projects2. Mentoring guide3. Consistency across DNP programs4. More standardized projects5. Better defined expectations6. More access to AACN doctoral conference7. Better understanding by IRB of DNP projects.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Financial support for students to ↓ their need to work (*resources)2. Financial support for student socialization (conferences etc.) (*resources)3. Better alignment between student and faculty research interests4. More funded faculty to work with students on dissertations.

Commonalities between DNP & PhD Faculty to facilitate mentoring effectiveness

1. Formal preparation for mentoring role
2. **More protected **time** to mentor students
3. Better prepared/qualified students (writing skills; awareness of scope of doctoral education)
4. **Lower students to faculty ratio to adequately implement mentoring role
5. **Student resources (especially writing and statistical support)
6. **Reasonable workload credit/reduction
7. Reduction in teaching assignments
8. Faculty development opportunities

Constraints Identified By All Faculty

1. Variable student needs and skills
2. Large number of students and projects/dissertations to oversee
3. Increased time commitment due to variability of student skills and needs
4. Impact of mentoring on faculty scholarship
5. Variable access to resources (primarily for students)
6. Faculty also in need of mentoring and additional training/preparation
7. Number of faculty retirements

Study Limitations

- Unclear how many faculty actually received the survey and chose not to respond
- Additional demographic info should have been included (age, years as an educator)
- Some started demographics but did not complete the survey
- Electronic programming problems on 2 questions

Recommendations

1. Need for intentional faculty development efforts
2. Pre-Immersion courses beneficial for doctoral students
3. Collaboration between PhD and DNP faculty
4. Develop guidelines across academic nursing (roles, mentoring standards and vision for academic nursing related to doctoral preparation)
5. Need formalized clarification from AACN on DNP and PhD student outcomes, not all faculty fully understand the 2 types of programs.

Questions?



Contact Information

Edilma Yearwood

ely2@georgetown.edu

Kelley Anderson

Kelley.Anderson@georgetown.edu

Karen Kesten

kkestn@gwu.edu



Thank You!



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