



Creating Synergy through Innovative PhD Education Strategies meeting AACN Standards with a Small Faculty

Gwen Wyatt, RN, PhD, FAAN

Rebecca Lehto, RN, PhD, FAAN

College of Nursing

Michigan State University

January 18, 2019



Purpose

- ▶ **Share three successful innovative strategies for meeting AACN PhD standards with a small nursing research faculty.**



Small Research Faculty

- * 10 in the faculty tenure system**
- * 5 in the temporary faculty system**

Current Research Faculty Areas of Focus

- 1. Health promotion/risk reduction**
- 2. Symptom science/chronic conditions**



Michigan State University College of Nursing

**PhD Program
Since 2000**



PhD Students

- * **34 Graduates of program**
- * **4 are 1st year students**
- * **2 are 2nd year students**
- * **5 @ Comprehensive/Dissertation**
- * **4 International students**

Admissions Process

- ▶ **Limit the number of students for each class based on faculty available.**
- ▶ **Admit students with interest in one of two research focus areas:**
 - 1) Health promotion/risk reduction**
 - 2) Symptom science/chronic conditions**

Curriculum

- ▶ **Refreshed curriculum**
- ▶ **Standard PhD courses in CON**
- ▶ **Electives in specialty area and statistics**
- ▶ **Research practicum with funded researcher**
- ▶ **Clinical practicum for BSN to PhD**
- ▶ **Graduation requirement ~65 semester credits**

Benchmarks Expectations

- * **Peer reviewed poster abstract**
- * **Peer reviewed podium abstract**
- * **Peer reviewed manuscript submission**
- * **Peer reviewed grant or NRSA submission**
- * **Responsible Conduct of Research**
- * **Seminar Attendance and presentation**
- * **Certifications: IRB, HIPPA, GCP**

Comprehensive Exam

Two Parts:

- 1. Written (a minimum of 6 weeks)**
- 2. Oral (~ 2 weeks after receiving written feedback from committee)**





Dissertations



Traditional Chapters

or

**Three manuscripts with Intro and
Conclusion Chapters**



Innovation 1

- ▶ **College of Nursing with a small numbers of faculty mentoring PhD students.**
- ▶ **Developed a course based on the strengths of research faculty**
- ▶ **provides students with two areas of research by taking a continuum perspective on age and health/illness.**

Innovation 2

- ▶ **PhD students take 4-6 credits of research practicum with a nationally funded researcher to build team science and research skills.**
- ▶ **Draw upon funded interdisciplinary colleagues in other departments and even at nearby universities.**

Innovation 3

- ▶ **Cohort advising is used during students' first semester**
- ▶ **assures students receive consistent information**
- ▶ **Provide a solid start to their program**
- ▶ **Cohort advising orients new faculty to the PhD program and prepares them to serve as faculty advisors.**



Quality Indicators

Our strategies allow a small faculty to meet all AACN indicators for PhD educational excellence



PhD AACN Indicators

AACN QUALITY INDICATOR	COURSE OBJECTIVES	MAJOR CONTENT/ TOPICS	LEARNING ACTIVITIES
Historical & philosophical foundations to the development of nursing knowledge.			
Existing & evolving substantive nursing knowledge			
Methods and processes of theory/knowledge development			
Research methods & scholarship appropriate to inquiry			
Development related to roles in academic, research, practice, or policy environments			

PhD AACN Indicators cont.

AACN QUALITY INDICATOR	COURSE OBJECTIVES	MAJOR CONTENT/ TOPICS	LEARNING ACTIVITIES
<p>Analytical & leadership strategies for dealing with social, ethical, cultural, economic, & political issues related to nursing, health care, & research</p>			
<p>Progressive & guided student scholarship research experiences including exposure to faculty's interdisciplinary research programs</p>			
<p>Immersion experiences that foster the student's development as a nursing leader, scholarly practitioner, educator and/or nurse scientist</p>			
<p>Socialization opportunities for scholarly development in roles that complement student's career goals.</p>			



Current Employment of Graduates



Post-docs
School/Colleges of Nursing
Nursing Administration

Summary

- 1. It takes planning**
- 2. It can be done**
- 3. It takes cooperation from all research faculty**
- 4. It takes a strong infrastructure**
- 5. It takes clear consistent leadership**





