

Examining Perceptions of Faculty Self-Censorship in Nursing Education

Kimberly Brown DNP, MSN-Ed.

Clinical Associate Professor, Director of Access, Engagement, and Belonging
University of Tennessee, Knoxville, College of Nursing

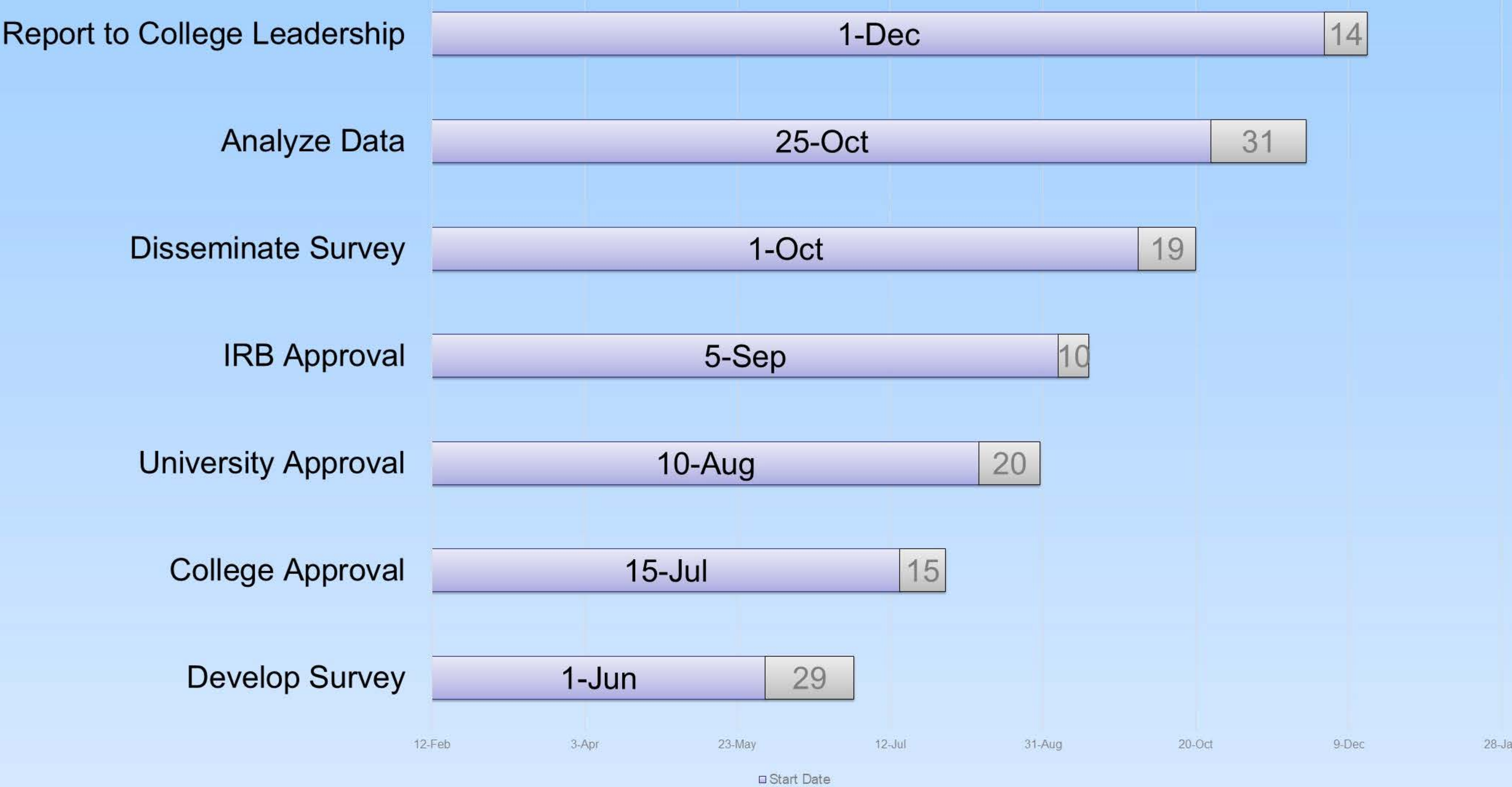
Background

- Nurse educators empower students to question, explore, and apply knowledge and skills in nuanced situations.
- Protecting academic freedom in nursing education ensures that future nursing professionals are prepared to be responsive, dynamic, and capable of leading and advocating effectively in a rapidly changing healthcare landscape.
- Self-censorship refers to the extent to which faculty have found themselves refraining from, avoiding, or modifying behaviors or speech with colleagues, students, and other stakeholders due to the academic climate.
- Self-censorship in nursing education is a concern that can hinder academic integrity, critical thinking, and the development of socially responsive healthcare professionals.

Methods

- The development of a 13-item survey instrument will be informed by the Academic Freedom and Civil Discourse in Higher Education: A National Study of Faculty Attitudes and Perceptions Report.
- An anonymous study will be conducted to gather faculty perceptions of self-censorship, academic rank or title, tenured status, and length of employment.
- The invitation email and all subsequent reminder email messages will include a unique survey link to a secure platform for each prospective participant.
- Latent Class Analysis (LCA) will be used to examine associations between groups per characteristics and responses to survey items.

Timeline



Implications

- In higher education colleges and universities must consider the ways in which social and positional power differentially affect the ability of faculty to exercise freedoms and support spaces for exchange. Differences in perceptions affect who feels secure in voicing opinions and whose voices are heard.
- The implications of self-censorship in nursing education are significant and far-reaching, affecting not only the educational environment but also the quality of patient care and the evolution of the nursing profession.
- Addressing these implications requires leadership committed to fostering open dialogue, protecting academic freedom, and promoting inclusive, courageous teaching practices.

Future Work

- Future research could serve to quantify the extent to which self-censorship among nursing faculty is triggered by institutional pressures, cultural norms, fear of offending, and/or other factors.
- Data may be used to examine how self-censorship affects faculty given rank, title and other power dynamics; assist in the development of faculty training and classroom strategies that promote safe and inclusive spaces; examine how institutional values may contribute to a culture of openness or silence and offer insights into best practices for curriculum development.

References



Purpose

The purpose of this project proposal is to examine the perceptions of self-censorship of faculty at a four-year public university nursing program in a state where divisive concepts legislation passed.

Contact Information

Kbrown81@utk.edu



Examining Perceptions of Faculty Self-Censorship in Nursing Education

Kimberly Brown, DNP, MSN-Ed.

Biography

Dr. Brown, a clinical associate professor, teaches in the traditional undergraduate Bachelor of Science in Nursing program at the University of Tennessee, College of Nursing. As the Director of Access, Engagement, and Belonging for the College of Nursing, Dr. Brown provides strategic, intentional and visionary leadership to create an integrated vision and shared responsibility for advancing university goals and fostering a campus culture that respects and appreciates individual differences.

Dr. Brown earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Tennessee Knoxville, a Master of Science in Nursing with specialization in Education from King University, and a Doctor of Nursing Practice with a specialization in Administration from the University of Tennessee Chattanooga. Dr. Brown is entering her 12th year as a faculty member at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Contact Information



Kimberly Brown, DNP, MSN-Ed.
Clinical Associate Professor
University of Tennessee, Knoxville College of Nursing
kbrown81@utk.edu