Shaping the BSN-to-PhD Student: Rewards and Lessons Learned

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AACN Doctoral Conference
Friday, January 31, 2020
11:15-12:30
D³ Deep Dive Discussion

Overview

• Historical overview
• Our experiences
• Current context and moving forward
• Discussion
Background of the BSN-to-PhD

Spirited Debate about the BSN-to-PhD
Number of Nursing PhD Programs Offering the BSN-to-PhD Option

135 PhD programs in the USA

The UMSONHS PhD in Nursing Science Program

• Full and part time options are available
• Full time
  • BSN-to-PhD
  • MSN-to-PhD
• Part time
  • MSN-to-PhD

25% BSN-to-PhD Students
BSN-to-PhD Student

Traditional  Experienced RN  Accelerated

Developmentally Different

Rewards

• Ability to mentor a ‘young’ scientist
• Potential career length
• Sometimes easier to recruit
• Accelerated BSN students bring unique life experiences.
• Graduates may be more willing to seek employment outside of academia compared to MSN-PhD graduates.
Problem

• Faculty noticed that students demonstrated difficulty linking research ideas with clinical phenomena of interest and vice versa.
  • Examples

Lesson Learned

• Clinical Inquiry I and II for BSN-to-PhD students
  • Overarching goal is to link clinical problems with research.
  • Designed to provide opportunities to gain clinical experience under the direct supervision of an RN or NP.
  • Experience is individualized.
  • Both courses contain a didactic component that helps student begin development of research ideas.
BSN-to-PhD Program

• 62 credit program: 50 credits of course work + 12 credits of doctoral dissertation
• Includes 2 clinical courses (8 credits with a total of 336 clinical hours.
• NUR 652: Clinical Inquiry I (3 credits) is offered Summer I before enrolling in Fall semester. 112 clinical hours.
• NUR 653: Clinical Inquiry II (5 credits) is offered Summer 2. 224 clinical hours.

Problem

• Lack of writing skills coupled with quantity of writing expected in 1st year of study.
• Socratic teaching style—no longer “Death by PowerPoint”
Lesson Learned

- There is a need to provide scholarship support.
  - Scholarship in Nursing Course
  - University and School-supported writing/editorial services
  - Instructional techniques

Problem

- There is a need to develop the BSN-to-PhD student within a community of scholars.
  - Active engagement
  - Progression through the program
  - Mentor-mentee match
  - Peer community
Lesson Learned

• A rich environment is needed to support the transition from student to burgeoning scholar.
  • SONHS Seminar Series (national and international experts)
  • University Seminars open to students
  • Research Assistantships versus Teaching Assistantships
  • Remodeling space
  • Regular engagement with student by multiple faculty

Lessons Learned (Continued)

• Two interventions that were trialed and **not** successful:
  • Clinical Scholars Program in collaboration with the University of Miami Hospital
  • Writing retreats
Summary of Lessons Learned

• Linking research to clinical phenomena in Clinical Inquiry I and II for BSN-to-PhD students.

• There is a need to provide support for scholarship.

• A rich environment is needed to support the transition from student to burgeoning scholar.

The Broader Context

PhD Pipeline:
A 9.6% decline in enrollment in PhD programs (2008 to 2017)

Emergence of the DNP:
348 programs enrolling 32,678 students and graduating 7,039 nurses

Fluctuating funding streams:
NIH success rates 30.5% (1997) to 20.3% (2018)
Success rate at NINR 10.3% (2018)

An evolving scientific landscape
Planning for the future

Discussion

• Are there any lingering concerns about the BSN-to-PhD option?
• What challenges have you encountered and how did you address them? What worked and what did not?
• What strategies can we use to increase enrollment of BSN-to-PhD students?
• What special considerations might there be for the BSN-to-PhD student (or program) in the future?
Thank you for attending!