PhD/DNP - Dual Degree Program

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Objectives
By the end of the presentation, the participant will be able to:
- Compare and contrast the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree and the PhD degree
- Describe dual degree program options
- Discuss strategies to recruit students to the PhD and DNP degree programs
History of Degrees

- PhD in other disciplines
- EdD degree for nurse educators since 1930s
- PhD in Nursing started mid-1960 with rapid growth in the 1980s
- DNS and DNSc were other research focused doctoral degrees in nursing

History of Degrees

- DNP degree established in 2004 by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) – position statement
- The Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice, AACN 2006
Purpose of Degrees

PhD
- Prepare nurse scientists/nurse researchers

DNP
- Practice focused – nurse practitioner, nurse anesthetist, clinical nurse specialist, nurse midwife, informaticist, administrator/leader

Neither is intended to prepare an educator

DNP Recommendation

- American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) recommended four advanced practice roles be educated at the DNP level by 2015
- National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties (NONPF) recommend DNP preparation for nurse practitioners by 2025
- American Association of Nurse Anesthetists require DNP program by 2025
Number of Programs

PhD
- 128 programs
- Enrollment flat to trending down

DNP
- 348 programs, 98 in planning phase
- Enrollment markedly rising

Plan of Study

PhD
- Post-baccalaureate to PhD
- Post-master’s to PhD

DNP
- Post-baccalaureate to DNP
- Post-master’s to DNP
- Post-graduate certificate option for nurse practitioners
Years in Program

PhD
- 3 to 5 years full-time
- 5 to 8 years part-time
DNP
- 3 years full-time
- 4 to 6 years part-time

Curriculum

PhD
- Research methods
- Statistics
- Specialty area courses
- Research practicum
DNP
- Practice focused
- Evidence-based practice, quality improvement, outcomes research
- Clinical practicum 1000 hours required
Each can add a teaching certificate
Finances

PhD
- Expectation of scholarships
- Financial aid
- Graduate assistant or research assistant positions

DNP
- Often use tuition plan from workplace
- Fewer scholarships available
- Some teaching assistant positions

Final Product

PhD
- Original research, discovery of new knowledge – dissertation

DNP
- Practice focused, protocols, implementation of evidence, outcomes evaluation – a project
**Employment**

PhD
- Faculty position as researcher
- Researcher for healthcare organization
- Government such as National Institutes of Health

DNP
- Practice position
- Faculty position
- Leadership position in practice

**Dual Degree Programs**

- Combined research and practice foci
- Some credits count toward both degrees
- Few schools currently offer
  - Case Western Reserve University
  - U Tennessee Memphis
  - University of Arizona
  - Johns Hopkins University
  - Others in development stage
PhD After the DNP Degree

- Some universities offer a sequential option rather than simultaneous
- Will count some of the DNP credits toward a PhD
- Example, Indiana University of Pennsylvania – focus of research is nursing education

Recruitment Strategies

PhD

- Must work hard to sell the program
- Students often do not understand a research career; think it is only statistics that they did not like in school
- Must promote the research expertise of faculty
- Need to sell the excitement of answering clinical questions
- Admit students whose interests are a match with faculty’s program of research
Recruitment Strategies

DNP
- Not as hard to sell the program
- Students usually have some notion of the practice roles
- Must promote the excellence of the program and the clinical sites
- Need to explain the role of an advanced practice nurse, informatician, or leadership position
- Admit students whose interests are a match with the program. Example if interest is primary care, do not admit to an acute care NP program

Resources
- The PhD Pipeline in Nursing
  https://www.aacnnursing.org/Portals/42/news/surveys-data/PhD-Pipeline.pdf
- AACN website – DNP and PhD information
Questions