



UNIVERSITY OF
SAN FRANCISCO

School of Nursing and
Health Professions

**American Association of Colleges of Nursing
2018 Exemplary Academic-practice Partnership Award**

One-page Description of the Academic-Practice Partnership

The University of San Francisco (USF) and Kaiser Permanente (KP) exemplify large, successful organizations that are fortunate to share a longstanding history and an exciting future vision of collaboration, education, and community service. Kaiser Permanente Northern California (NC) is one of seven major regions within this national, integrated healthcare delivery system including hospitals, the Permanente Medical Group, and a managed care health plan. KP headquarters is in Oakland, CA; the Office of the USF President is in San Francisco, CA. USF School of Nursing and Health Professions (SONHP) is one of five schools at USF which serves students on its main campus in SF and five regional campuses from Sacramento to Orange California. USF, the city's first university, was established by the Jesuits in 1855 and remains part of a nationwide network of 28 Jesuit universities. Therefore, we appreciate the complexity and welcome the challenges when multidimensional opportunities are presented to senior leaders and decision makers. The Academic-Practice Partnership (APP) between USF SONHP and the new KP NC Nurse Scholars Academy (NSA) reflects one such opportunity that will hopefully become a replicable model around the country.

For decades, the USF SONHP and KP NC have renewed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for clinical placements of undergraduate and graduate students at regional KP hospitals. Between 2013-14, conversations between senior nursing leaders in both organizations were stimulated by the *Future of Nursing Report: Leading Change, Advancing Health* (National Academy of Sciences, 2010), emerging new roles, such as the Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) and Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP), in addition to research suggesting that increased levels of nursing education leads to better client outcomes. The KP NC NSA was established in 2015 to address workforce development at all system levels throughout the region's 21 hospitals to enhance undergraduate and graduate professional development. Seven criteria were defined for graduate school selection including an established doctoral program; years of experience; multiple formats (PhD, DNP, Executive Leadership); flexibility; reputation; affordability; and capacity to adapt to KP nurse competencies.

Since USF launched the first MSN with a Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) focus, Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree, and an Executive Leadership track in a DNP program in CA and earned high respect for providing a values-based, rigorous, academic education, KP chose USF SONHP as an academic partner after assessing several academic graduate nursing programs. Between 2015 and 2018, a total of 69 students have graduated or are in progress (24 DNP-EL and 45 MSN-CNL). The complementarity of both organizations cannot be overemphasized as a key success factor to operationalize the introduction and evolution of this new multi-layered model over the past 4 years. The overarching goals for APP activities focus on promoting seamless, rigorous academic programs, advancing nursing leadership in the KP workforce, leading the transformation and redesign of systems change to improve clinical outcomes, and creating healthy, respectful work environments. In addition, both organizations encourage an action-oriented, caring culture that stimulates disruptive innovation, experiential learning, and a passion for social justice.

A joint USF-KP Advisory Council, established early in the partnership, fostered trust, transparency, and mutual accountability as goals were set. The joint partnership advisory council structure ensures ongoing communication and collaboration between both organizations, a key mechanism to reduce the theory-to-practice gap. All activities are designed to maximize productivity and scholarship and to accomplish synergistic organizational, student, and client outcomes as described in the accompanying matrix document. The vision for this APP could not have been achieved without the wholehearted dedication of many people, but especially the former and current dean, associate dean for graduate programs and community partnerships, and a full-time dedicated KP NC program director functioning as faculty liaison and "cultural broker" for the MSN-CNL program. Dedicated time and specific roles and responsibilities for the USF SONHP - KP NSA implementation have also been allotted for the DNP-EL program director. These roles ensure that the practice and leadership environments at KP continually inform curriculum design to remain relevant in highly-competitive, rapidly-changing, value-driven, complex health care delivery systems. Our partnership is entering its fifth year and has transformed nursing practice by integrating new leadership approaches and improvement science tenets to benefit patients, students, faculty, staff, and leaders in complex health care delivery systems and academic nursing education.