Becoming a Nurse Researcher or Nurse Practitioner: UK’s DNP and Ph.D. Programs

Terry Lennie, PhD, RN, FAAN
Associate Dean for PhD Studies
University of Kentucky College of Nursing
Contact: tlennie@uky.edu

Kathy Collins
Graduate Student Affairs Officer
University of Kentucky College of Nursing
Contact: kathy.collins@uky.edu
Purpose

• Differentiate between research and practice doctorates

• Discuss the future of doctoral education at the University of Kentucky

• Provide overview of both programs
Points of Pride

• DNP program was the first in the country
  • MSN-DNP students admitted in 2001
  • BSN-DNP students admitted in 2009

• PhD program
  • First in the state
    • now in its 27th year
  • One of the best in the country
    • among the top 10 programs in the US

• World class faculty

• UK CON is the only college in Kentucky to offer both the DNP and PhD
Growth in Doctoral Nursing Programs: 2006-2013

Doctor of Nursing Practice
- 2006: 20
- 2007: 53
- 2008: 92
- 2009: 120
- 2010: 153
- 2011: 182
- 2012: 217
- 2013: 241

Research-Focused Doctoral
- 2006: 111
- 2007: 124
- 2008: 120
- 2009: 130
- 2010: 133
- 2011: 126
- 2012: 124
- 2013: 116

Source: © American Association of Colleges of Nursing. All Rights Reserved
Enrollments and Graduations in DNP Programs: 2004-2013

Source: © American Association of Colleges of Nursing. All Rights Reserved
Enrollments and Graduations in PhD/DNS Programs: 2004-2013

Source: © American Association of Colleges of Nursing. All Rights Reserved
Two Views of the Problems Patients Face

Not enough information on the shelf
Large gaps in knowledge
Poor quality evidence
Need for more and better quality research information
Too Much Information

Plenty of information on the shelf

Not synthesized or presented in useful ways at point of decision-making

Few effective tools for shared decision-making
Making a Difference

- Create the knowledge base
- Implement evidence-based practice
- Be cost-effective
The DNP

• Prepare graduates to engage in advanced nursing practice & provide leadership for evidence-based practice.
  ▪ Translation of research into practice
  ▪ Evaluation of practice
  ▪ Generate evidence to guide practice
  ▪ Participate in collaborative research
  ▪ Disseminate findings from evidence-based practice
The PhD

• Charged with discovery, synthesis, teaching, and service
  • To provide evidence to guide practice and support practice change
    • What additional evidence do we need?
  • To identify novel approaches or interventions
    • Is there a better way?
  • To determine which approach is most effective
    • Is this the best way?
Clinical Scholarship

Clinical Research (PhD)

Theory Development (PhD-DNP)

Practice Inquiry (DNP)

broad concept that includes practice based theory development, clinical research and practice inquiry
To translate evidence from a local practice change to larger scale, research is needed
Research conducted locally can have a global impact
The Future

Revising the PhD and DNP programs to enhance the ability of graduates to collaborate in developing evidence for practice
Models

• DNP and PhD students collaborating on problems of mutual interest
• Faculty, DNP and PhD students working on common problems (maybe with other disciplines)
Doctoral Education Task Force

- Faculty recognized that
  - there was common knowledge that both groups of doctoral students needed
  - students would benefit from learning together and developing an understanding of their respective roles
- Doctoral Education Task Force appointed
Doctoral Education Task Force

• Developing courses that PhD and DNP will take together
  • Examples:
    • Evaluating Evidence
    • Philosophy and Concepts Underlying Research and Practice Doctorates
    • Professional Leadership
PhD Program
College of Nursing
Goal: Prepared for collaborative scholarship
Team Science

• Lead teams
  • Patients
  • Other stakeholders
  • Clinicians
  • Scientist with complementary expertise
  • Economist
  • Biostatistician
Big Data
Comparative Effectiveness

- Designed to inform health-care decisions by providing evidence on the effectiveness, benefits, and harms of different treatment options.
Translational Science

- Graduates of research and practice doctorates can work in synergy to support innovative, nursing science-based patient care.

www.NursingScience.org
PhD program overview
Mentorship

• Believe in a strong mentorship model
• Assigned an advisor on admission
  • Works closely with student to plan program of study, identify research topic, and select papers for dissertation
• Advisory committee
  • Comprised of 4 members: (2 must be from CON)
    • Advisor
    • other members of the college of nursing faculty or another college on campus
  • Purpose is to mentor and guide student through PhD program and assure student meets academic standards
Entry Levels

- BSN entry
  - 5 semesters of coursework plus dissertation
  - Receive clinical experience at advanced practice level
  - Kentucky nursing license
    - Must have Kentucky license at time clinical is taken: usually 2\textsuperscript{nd} year
    - Not required at time of admission

- MSN entry
  - 4 semesters of coursework plus dissertation
  - Kentucky nursing license is not required
Coursework

• Nursing core
  • All classes in the college of nursing are offered on Wednesdays
  • Moving classes to distance learning format

• Cognates
  • 3 courses taken outside the college of nursing
  • Essentially a minor in an area that informs your research

• Statistics
  • 3 courses
    • 2 taken outside of nursing
    • 1 as part of nursing core content

• BSN student clinical cognate
  • 2 courses taken in area of clinical specialty
    • Adult/Gerontology
    • Pediatrics
    • Community Health
    • Psychiatry/Mental Health
Manuscript option for dissertation

- Dissertation comprised of publishable manuscripts
  - They don’t have to be published at time of dissertation defense but many students have one or more published by time of defense

- Requirement
  - Chapter 1. Introductory chapter.
    - Usually 5 to 10 pages
  - Chapter 2. Publishable manuscript 1.
    - Usually a course paper converted to a manuscript
  - Chapter 3. Publishable manuscript 2.
    - Usually a course paper converted to a manuscript
  - Chapter 4. Publishable manuscript 3.
    - Dissertation study
  - Chapter 5. Summary and conclusion chapter.
    - Usually 5-10 pages
Research Career
Making a difference

• 24 members of the College of Nursing faculty
  • Reducing risks
  • Reversing health disparities
  • Improving quality of life
  • Decreasing complications
  • Changing communities

• Broad impact, research can change practice nationally and globally

• Spending time with patients
  • Patients spend only .001% of their time with HCP
Research Career

• Collaborating
  • with research colleagues across the United State and world
  • with DNP colleagues to transform practice and improve patient outcomes
Research Career

• Discovery, problem solving, being the one who provides the evidence
  • “Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose.” -Zora Neale Hurston
Research can take us to that somewhere
Consensus Model for APRN Regulation:

Licensure, Accreditation, Certification & Education

- APRN model of regulation there are four roles: certified registered nurse anesthetist (CRNA), certified nurse-midwife (CNM), clinical nurse specialist (CNS), and certified nurse practitioner (CNP).
- APRNs are educated in one of the four roles and in at least one of six population foci: family/individual across the lifespan, adult-gerontology, pediatrics, neonatal, women’s health/gender-related or psych/mental health.
- Individuals who have the appropriate education are eligible to take a national certification examination to assess national competencies of the APRN core, role and at least one population focus area of practice for regulatory purposes to obtain APRN licensure.
Understanding the role of the APRN

Licensure, Accreditation, Certification and Education (LACE)
• Licensure is the granting of regulatory authority to practice.
• Accreditation is the formal review and approval by a recognized agency of educational degree or certification programs in nursing or nursing-related programs.
• Certification is the formal recognition of the knowledge, skills, and experience demonstrated by the achievement of standards identified by the profession.
• Education is the formal preparation of APRNs in graduate degree-granting or post-graduate certificate programs.
Links to information, admission requirements and application for graduate nursing programs:

**Doctor of Philosophy of Nursing (PHD)**
- [Sample curriculum](#)

**Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)**
- [Sample curriculum](#)
- [Specialties offered](#)

**Post Graduate Certificate**