

**Creating Health Policy Success for DNP Students: A Course Initiative**

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**Presentation Abstract**

One of the essential components of the DNP role is leadership in the development of health policy initiatives. The DNP Program at Georgia Southern University provides a capstone DNP role immersion experience that offers the student a real world role in leading policy development using diverse approaches. Eleven students, completing individualized DNP role immersion experiences, engaged in policy strategies to improve the practice environment of advanced practice nurses, and to improve patient safety and health care outcomes.

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**Presentation Goal and Objectives**

To synthesize how DNP students using diverse strategies can impact health care policy and effectively market the role of the DNP nurse.

1. Identify diverse strategies that employ health policy leadership skills.
2. Utilize a creative curriculum approach to advance health policy and leadership competencies.
3. Demo how DNP students can accomplish significant changes in health policy and marketing of the role in one semester.

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### **DNP Capstone Immersion Course**

This capstone clinical experience course provides an opportunity to integrate the role of the DNP in a comprehensive real-world context that includes utilization of leadership, consultation, advocacy, and collaboration. Individual experiences will be developed under the guidance of a faculty advisor.

[3 credits; 180 applied clinical hours]



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### **Course Individual Learning Objectives**

The student will be able to:

1. Integrate the role of the DNP in a real-world context.
2. Disseminate to colleagues how the DNP can positively impact the health outcomes of the nation.



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### **Course Assignments**

1. Immersion Progression Updates (6)	45 pts
2. Abstract on DNP Clinical Project Presentation	10 pts
3. Formal DNP Clinical Project Presentation	30 pts
4. Self-evaluation of DNP Program	
Student Learning Outcomes	15 pts



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### Progression Update 1

Progress Update 1 of 6		
DNP Essential	Suggested Readings	Points for Grade
<p>Part 1. Provide a synthesis of your planned role immersion experience, identify major individuals who will be involved, where it is to occur, and how this experience will be beneficial in your growth and understanding of the DNP role. Include at least 2 <b>measurable</b> outcomes for the capstone experience. Identify the AACN DNP Essential(s) that you will be addressing during the capstone experience. Note applied clinical hours completed.</p>		
<p>Part 2. Select from the readings and reflect on how the readings and <b>Essential VIII, Vision for Advanced Nursing Practice</b>, are related to your capstone experience.</p>	<p>Institute of Medicine (IOM) (2010). <i>The future of nursing: Leading change, advancing health</i>. Washington DC: The National Academies of Medicine. <a href="http://www.iom.edu/Reports/2010/The-Future-of-Nursing-Leading-Change-Advancing-Health.aspx">http://www.iom.edu/Reports/2010/The-Future-of-Nursing-Leading-Change-Advancing-Health.aspx</a>.</p>	7

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### Progression Update 4

Progress Update 4 of 6		
DNP Essential	Suggested Readings	Points for Grade
<p>Provide a synthesis of the major areas in your personal development within this DNP role immersion. How would you have modified this planned immersion experience to further your development if you knew at the beginning of the course what you know now? What challenges were presented to you? How could you have addressed them differently or modified the experience to avoid them all together? Note applied clinical hours completed.</p>		
<p>Part 2. Select from the readings and reflect on how the readings and <b>Essential V, Policy &amp; Advocacy for Health Care</b>, is related to your capstone experience.</p>	<p>1. Hahn, J. (2009). Power dynamics, health policy, and politics. <i>Medsurg Nursing</i>, 18(3), 197-199.                  2. Sheehan, A. (2010). The value of health care advocacy for nurse practitioners. <i>Journal of Pediatric Health Care</i>, 24(4), 280-282. Retrieved November 17, 2010 from <a href="http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/726510">http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/726510</a>.</p>	7

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### DNP Essential V: Health Care Policy for Advocacy in Health Care

*“The DNP graduate has the capacity to engage proactively in the development and implementation of health policy at all levels, including institutional, local, state, regional, federal, and international levels. DNP graduates as leaders in the practice arena provide a critical interface between practice, research, and policy. Preparing graduates with the essential competencies to assume a leadership role in the development of health policy requires that students have opportunities to contrast the major contextual factors and policy triggers that influence health policy-making at the various levels.”*

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**Immersion Exemplars Impacting Policy**

1. Passage of state law improving APRN's scope of practice in Georgia  
---Myron Faircloth, DNP, FNP-BC, Valdosta, GA
2. Initiation of a Tobacco Free Policy in a Health District in Georgia  
---Jan Smith, DNP FNP-BC, Power Springs, GA

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**Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.**

**--Margaret Mead**

As cited in Marshall, E. (2011). Transformational Leadership in Nursing. New York: Springer Pub.

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**Exemplar 1: APRN State Legislative Success**

**Issue:** APRNs in GA unable to perform and sign for peace officer physicals by law.

**Immersion Objectives:**

1. To introduce a bill sponsored by a local legislator to amend language of GA Section 35-8-8, the employment and training of peace officers, to include advance practice registered nurses by 2-1-2011.
2. To pass a bill by the Georgia Legislature (as noted above) and have this bill signed into law by Governor Deal by the end of the 40 day legislative session.

**DNP Essentials addressed:** 2, 5, 6

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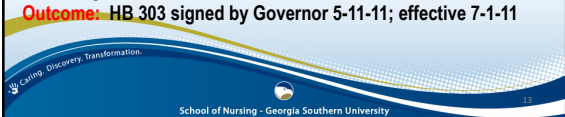
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**Exemplar 1: Immersion Outcome**

**Action:** Contacted local legislator, wrote HB 327 for 2011 session to allow APRNs to sign for the exams.

1. Since this change involved peace officers and the difficulty with passage of past APRN legislation by the HHS committee, this bill was submitted to the House Public Safety and Homeland Security Committee for consideration.
2. Another legislator suggested combining HB 327 with HB 303 —a PA bill that would allow signing of all state forms except death certificates and assigning a percentage on a disability rating.

**Outcome:** HB 303 signed by Governor 5-11-11; effective 7-1-11




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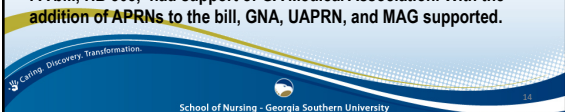
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**Exemplar 1: Supporting Actions**

- Networking: state APRN organization and Georgia Nurse's Association, local police, Georgia Sheriff's association.
- Grassroots effort within SON
  - Emailed all APRN alumni for legislative contact to garner support.
  - APRN faculty had undergraduate students signatures on letters.
  - Faculty and students made legislative email or phone contacts
  - Phone calls to local sheriffs and law enforcement explaining current law with rationale on need to change it.
  - Elicited support from physicians that supported this change.
- PA bill, HB 303, had support of GA Medical Association. With the addition of APRNs to the bill, GNA, UAPRN, and MAG supported.




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**Passing State Policy: Lessons Learned**

- Know the issue, research the issue, and document the facts.
- Know the legislative process (ie steps of legislation & crossover day), and length of the session (in GA 40 days).
- Belong to state nursing groups.
- Establish networking contacts beyond nursing.
- Support legislative campaigns with time/effort.
- Grassroots effort work.
- Thank legislators for support. Recognize them by inviting them to speak at local chapters and the state APRN group.
- Disseminate information regarding those legislators who support the profession.




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**Exemplar 2: Initiating Local Tobacco Free Policy**

**Issue:** Lack of tobacco free policy in GA Health District 1 Unit 1 counties, including Paulding.

**Immersion Objectives:**

1. Write a public health policy for 100% tobacco free campuses for schools and government locations.
2. For all organizations regardless of adoption of the 100% tobacco free policy, provide resources for nicotine replacement, cessation classes and a "Quit Line" phone number.

**DNP Essentials Addressed:** 1, 2, 4, 5




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**Exemplar 2: Immersion Outcomes**

**Action:** Developed evidence-based tobacco free policy and contacted county agencies in Paulding County, GA to include 30 daycares, BOE, BOH, 5 churches, County Board of Commissioners, Dept Parks and Recreation local Hospital system and local nursing home.

**Outcome:** Multiple daycare centers, places of worship, the local health department, and the county school system agreed to implement the policy, some immediately, others to implement with a one year of adoption.




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**Exemplar 2: Supporting Actions**

- Working with District 1-1
  - Dr. Jan Smith sits on the Board of Health.
  - When performing food inspections, the environmentalist provided posters with tobacco cessation information, including tear off strips for the GA quit line.
  - Literature on tobacco cessation was available to all interested parties, signage for tobacco free zones was available based on the setting from cling stickers and banners to metal signs.




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**Passing Local Policy: Lessons Learned**

- Identify potential barriers early.
- Know the players as gatekeepers can prohibit access to others.
- Identify key supporters first.
- Barriers occur where you least expect it.
- Take the small successes and move forward.
- Accept that change takes time.




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**DNP Essential 5: Health Policy Outcomes**

Measurement Tool—CA-OAT**	Rating*
Capstone course:	2.81
• Cohort self-evaluation of outcome achievement in Capstone course	
• Faculty overall rating of outcome achievement in Capstone course	2.54
Overall curriculum cohort student learning outcome (program outcomes) achievement	2.35

\*Rating Scale: 2 = at expectation . 3 = above expectation at this point in curriculum  
 \*\*Critical Assessment Outcomes Assessment Tool ( used throughout program)




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**Policy Immersion Experience Conclusions**

- DNP students make significant policy impact in 1 semester.
- Creative course assignments allow development of health policy leadership competency.
- Success brings student pride in accomplishments and confidence in leadership within the profession.
- Contributions to the discipline of nursing and action to improve health outcomes.
- Fosters professional engagement to lead within the legislative process. An area where we have been passive allowing others to dictate our scope of practice.




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**Nine Other Immersion Experiences**

**Establishment of**

- FNP run clinic
- FNP geriatric home visit business

**Research on:**

- Improving diabetic patient outcomes using nurse developed curriculum for group visit model

**Leadership in**

- Increasing PCP confidence in identifying CKD and making appropriate referral
- Developing EBP drug management protocol in hospice setting
- PC protocols
- Establishing recognition of “mid-levels” on health science campus
- Development of Medical Home application for PCPs in SC county
- Writing business plan for school-based clinic

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**While many people believe that transforming organizations...is the most difficult, the truth is that transforming ourselves is the hardest job. And if we transform ourselves, we transform the world.**

**-Dag Hammerskjold**

As cited in Marshall, E. (2011). Transformational Leadership in Nursing. New York: Springer Pub.

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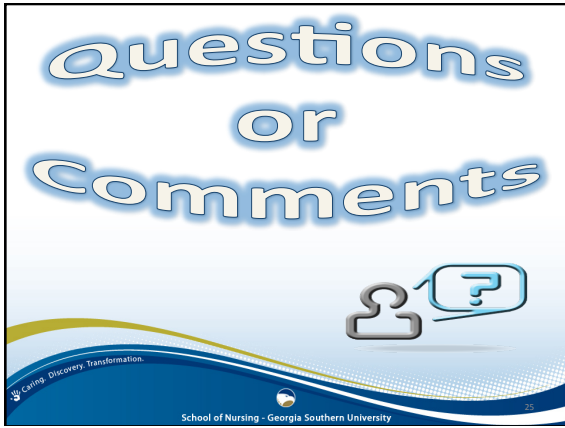
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