Creating and Sustaining QUALITY in DNP Projects: Practical Tips

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Problems and Challenges

Since the publication of the AACN (2015) White Paper, faculty and students continue to confuse terminology, misinterpret information, and debate the "rigor" of DNP scholarship. The purpose of this presentation is to describe an internal quality improvement initiative to address this gap. A multi-modal intervention targeted faculty, students, and the DNP Project itself. An institutional brochure, DNP workshop series, reconfiguration of Project Classes/Project Toolkit, and a project QI tool were implemented. Now, in phase 2 of the cycle, results are positive and presented. Focus is also placed on recognizing that the creation of such resources require constant review and revision, as well as the need to identify such tools as "living documents" that are updated to reflect the current state of doctoral education.

As nursing adjusts to the constantly changing state of healthcare, environmental factors, as well as the evolving educational requirements, there is a need to focus efforts around the DNP project on a larger, broader scale. This program will highlight the shared strategies of a large urban academic program as contrasted with a small, rural online DNP program in an effort to ensure sustained quality.
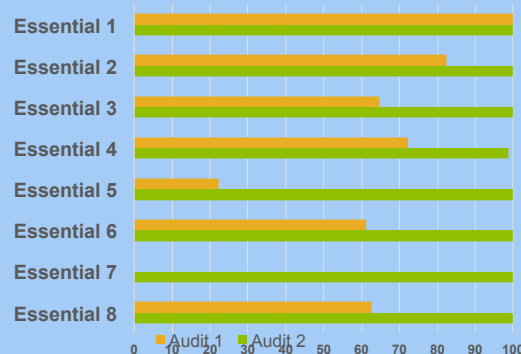
Practical Tips

1. Quality Improvement begins in your institution whether it is large or small.
2. Start with audits of completed projects against the DNP Essentials, the AACN White Paper, and your institutions requirements.
3. Consider incorporation of other tools for assessment of quality and rigor.
4. Keep the evaluation process constant and ongoing.
5. Share with faculty the DATA on the program outcomes.

Strategies to Improve

Workshop
- ❑ Offer multiple times
- ❑ Debriefing feedback is positive
- ❑ "I have a better understanding of the project process…"

1:1
- ❑ Required students to complete Question Development Tool prior to meeting
- ❑ Provide individualized written goals
- ❑ Improvement of communication and utilization of resources

Toolkit
- ❑ Establishes minimum expectations
- ❑ Guides students and faculty through process
- ❑ "Living Document"
- ❑ Framework for starting a QI process for DNP Project rigor

References

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Results – Evidence of DNP Essentials and DNP Recommendations

	Audit 1 N=30	Audit 2 N= 83	Difference
Foundation for Future Practice Scholarship	37.5%	98.8%	+ 61.3%
Change Impacting Outcomes	83.33%	100%	+16.67%
Guide Clinical Practice	94.12%	90%	- 5.88%
Evaluation of Processes and/or Outcomes	38.89%	91.56%	+ 52.67%
Plan for Sustainability	52.94%	98.8%	+45.86%
Demonstrates Implementation	72.22%	98.8%	+26.58%
Systems Focus	100%	100%	n/a

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