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TRANSFORMING DOCTORAL
EDUCATION FOR NURSE
PRACTITIONERS THROUGH THE
CLINICAL PORTFOLIO

S. Grossman, Ph.D, APRN, J. Conelius, Ph.D, APRN, M. Kazer, Ph.D APRN, J. Shea, DNSc, APRN, K. Wheeler, Ph.D, APRN, & N. Moriber, Ph.D, APRN

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Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP)

- Terminal degree

- Prepares expert clinicians for advanced leadership roles, interprofessional collaboration, and system management skills.

- Practice portfolio-premise that DNP education primarily involves the mastery of an area of advanced nursing practice and should include evidence of patient and population outcomes.

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Clinical Portfolio

- Strong focus on EBP and quality improvement

- Demonstrate attainment of the DNP competencies

- Showcases their individual areas of clinical and doctoral expertise

- Integration of theory and research into practice

- Serves as the foundation upon which students continue to build within their chosen areas of scholarly study or professional development long after successful completion of the program..

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Electronic Portfolio

- "eportfolio"
- Time saving
- Accessible for constant review, analysis and reflection.
- Advisors, preceptors, and fellow students are invited to view.
- Advantages and Disadvantages

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Advantages & Disadvantages

- Accessibility
- One area
- Ease of use
- Ability to see comments ASAP
- Available after graduation
- Less duplication if have multiple faculty working with student

- Learning curve
- Server malfunction
- Security

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Elements of Clinical Portfolio

- Needs to have evidence of national competencies, DNP essentials and program outcomes of the school.
- Immersion mapped against NONPF, ANAE, and DNP essentials and demonstrated competence in the provision, coordination, and direction of care to healthy patients and those with chronic comorbidities, across environments of care and the life span.

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Elements of Clinical Portfolio

- Clinical Narrative-comprehensive case study format (Smolowitz, Honig, Reinisch,2010).

- Meets competencies and program outcomes

- Translate research into practice-develop a clinical problem and complete a research proposal that is IRB ready.

- Develop an evidence-based grant proposal to demonstrate their query in a particular clinical area.

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Elements of Clinical Portfolio

- Reflective practice frame-work-form of "inner work" that results in the energy for engaging in "outer service."

- Reflections to tie together various elements of learning and facilitate deeper consideration of themselves and their professional practice.

- Continuous reexamination of oneself personally and professionally.

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Elements of Clinical Portfolio

- Evaluation of a healthcare system outcome to achieve quality improvement.

- Quality improvement proposal-systematic, data-guided initiatives or processes designed to enhance health care delivery in a particular setting.

- Leadership roles-to improve healthcare delivery and outcomes.
  - Implementation of clinical policies, attendance at state and national policy summits and meetings, or by sharing issues and possible solutions from clinical experiences with legislators.

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Role of Faculty

- Guide and mentor, Portfolio Advisor (PA)
- Demands a considerable investment of both time and energy
- Immersion sites
- Longitudinal relationship
- Collaborative process
- Timelines and adherence

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Student Responsibilities with Portfolio

- Students are asked during each semester prior to an immersion experience to develop goals for the upcoming Immersion in collaboration with their PA.
- The goals must be clear, relevant, and measurable; a specific product (referred to as a "Practice Outcome Measure") that verifies the accomplishment of each goal also needs to be identified (e.g. a certificate validating completion of an educational program, slides developed for classes taught by the student, etc.).

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Cont'd Student

- Students are responsible for collecting all necessary Practice Outcome Measures (POM's) and uploading them to the Clinical Portfolio (CP) upon completion of each Immersion experience.
- The PA is then responsible for the review/ acceptance of each POM, and for indicating their agreement with the Immersion hours listed on that semester's log.

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Cont'd Student

- As students begin to plan for the next Immersion, or for the work they need to do to complete a course assignment for the CP, they are asked to reflect on their individual strengths and previous clinical experiences, and to use that knowledge when considering opportunities that might best provide the expertise they need.

- For example, a student who has already had significant experience with collecting and analyzing data for research might specifically look for opportunities in the healthcare policy realm.

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Cont'd Student

- As students progress in the DNP curriculum and refine their future career goals, they are encouraged to engage in networking and to identify potential Immersion sites that are a match for their needs.

- The Clinical Portfolio presents an opportunity for the student to document his/her growth as a clinician-scholar. The portfolio documents the full range of skills and competencies developed by DNP students across courses and clinical settings.

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Cont'd Student

- It is the responsibility of each student to take individual course assignments in the direction most meaningful to them, and adds items to the portfolio that best capture their individual transformation. Upon completion of the final Immersion experience, the student is required to submit a final reflection summarizing how they have met each DNP program outcome; their PA then reviews this reflection, along with all related material in the CP, and documents whether the student has met/ not met the individual outcomes

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Faculty/Student Joint Responsibilities

- Using the Clinical Portfolio as the final DNP scholarly project can leave students with the feeling that they are on their own in linking the various items required for the portfolio and confused about their relevance to scholarship at the doctoral level.

- Conversely, faculty can be left feeling over-burdened with the tasks of co-creating, reviewing, monitoring, and verifying information contained in the CP (Brown & Kaplan, 2011).

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Faculty/Student Joint Role

- As is most often the case, the relationship between the student and their PA is crucial for the success of the student.

- Both are responsible for scheduling regular meetings and for completing the tasks each had agreed to at the previous session (i.e. students submit completed work and faculty provide substantive feedback).

- Additionally, both must contribute to the outcome-driven process for each Immersion experience.

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Faculty/Student Joint Role

- With a curricular structure to follow, a collegial and respectful relationship in place, and shared commitment to the process of DNP education, both student and faculty can derive benefits from the work involved in creating a CP.

- As described by Shirey (2009), the CP can be a way of preparing the student "to leverage talents and to prepare for quickly pouncing on unexpected opportunities" (p. 241).

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CP - Accomplishment of DNP Program Outcomes

- The DNP Program Outcomes are accomplished by the portfolio requirements

- As discussed earlier, many of the portfolio requirements are imbedded in DNP courses. Each portfolio requirement of a particular course (papers, presentations and projects) has faculty-developed grading criteria.

- One immersion activity that is particularly interesting to students is development of Practice Guidelines which is not a course requirement.

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Evaluation of Portfolio

- Faculty teaching the course grade the student's work and provide feedback on the assignment and re-check that the student uses the feedback on the project appropriately prior to uploading it onto the portfolio.

- Students discuss their course projects with faculty to satisfy program outcomes and specialty organization competencies.

- In some cases, course projects may be implemented during the clinical immersion experiences. Students are able to demonstrate the accomplishment of individualized goals, their specialty competencies, and the DNP program outcomes by completing the clinical portfolio. Some projects become the capstone project.

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Example of Portfolio Entry from Course

One example of the integration of a course project in the clinical immersion experience was demonstrated when a student developed a Physician-Advanced Practice Nurse Interprofessional Council at a Level 1 Teaching Hospital during one of her immersion experiences using the course project guidelines for *NS 615: Leadership & Interprofessional Collaboration*.

Course project was to develop an **interprofessional practice-level and/or system-wide initiative to improve quality of care**

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Example of Portfolio Entry from Course

- A student used the IRB proposal guidelines in one course to develop an IRB proposal to test the effects of a nurse education program on heart failure to decrease heart failure patients' recidivism rates.

- While only hypothetical projects are required during these courses to demonstrate their knowledge for this course requirement, the concurrent immersion experience does allow the students to implement their projects.

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Portfolio Evaluation

- Ongoing feedback from both students and faculty have been positive regarding the clinical portfolio.

- The current DNP cohort using the clinical portfolio have been able to plan more experiences in their immersions with multiple interprofessional providers, policymakers, and health care delivery administrators than those involved in a practice capstone paper.

- Students describe the portfolio requirements listing as extremely helpful in planning productive immersion experiences. Faculty involved with DNP students have positively evaluated the clinical portfolio over the practice capstone paper in the monthly meetings/phone calls coordinated by the Graduate Program Director.

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Online Portal

- Students and faculty have evaluated the online portal as user friendly and helpful in organizing and evaluating experiences with correlated outcomes.

- The DNP program received CCNE accreditation and the Clinical Portfolio garnered positive feedback from the site visitors in 2012. The portal was deemed easy to access and comprehensive.

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Capstone Project

- The capstone demonstrates the integration of the immersion experiences and allows students to apply whole or parts of the major course papers/projects from the DNP courses.

- The capstone paper is a publication-ready manuscript that must be presented in front of a professional audience as well as faculty and ready to submit for publication.

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Rubric for Written Capstone

Topic	Points
Organization/Writing Style	10
Introduction/Background	10
Literature Synthesis	30
Purpose	10
Description of Population	10
Application to Clinical Practice	20
Conclusion	10

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Rubric for Oral Defense

Topic	Points
Professional Demeanor	10
Professional Delivery	10
Ability to Address Questions	35
Competency with Presentation Content	35
Conclusion	10

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Conclusion

- The Clinical Portfolio incorporates a variety of competency-based activities and projects allowing students to showcase their individual learning experiences while providing an objective measure of their achievement.

- According to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) this final project should provide tangible evidence of the students' expertise derived from all educational experiences with a primary focus on the practice immersion (AACN, 2006).

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Conclusion

- The eportfolio meets these mandates and provides a rich tapestry of learning experiences for students and the opportunity for faculty to collaborate with each other and students as partners in achieving practice excellence.

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Conclusion

- Graduates from practice focused doctorates need to be prepared as advanced nursing practice experts and leaders who have accomplished evidence synthesis and/or practice improvement projects not research (Slyer & Levin 2012).

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