

# Teaching in Nursing for the Professional Nurse Educator: An Academic Practice Partnership

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## Abstract

This Academic-Practice Partnership created a formal infrastructure to design an innovative program with an overall goal, program outcomes, outcomes metrics, content outline, and an evaluation plan. This infrastructure included formally designating the project leader, roles and responsibilities of leaders, and commitment to attending planning meetings and gathering academia and practice leadership support. This structure supported the design of a "Teaching in Nursing for the Professional Nurse Educator program" based on a needs assessment of new nurse educators in the role of Nursing Professional Development (NPD) coordinators and new nursing faculty. Literature suggested faculty and educator development needs to focus specially on core teaching skill development (Bigbee, Rainwater, & Butani, 2016). The needs assessment within the practice settings indicated similar findings to published studies with experienced nurses finding themselves in new roles where curriculum development, evaluation, and teaching being a major focus of the role with minimal formal education on how to fulfill this role (Burke, Richardson, & Smith, 2017). A series of workshops were created tailored to the common needs of nursing faculty and nursing professional development coordinators who were new to the role. As time and space are continual challenges in providing programming for staff and faculty development a hybrid approach was selected as it has been found to be preferred to either fully online or face to face (Bigbee et al., 2016; Joseph, Oh, & Ackerman, 2018). The design included one hour of theoretical foundation on the topic followed by a face to face session with the academic faculty facilitating each session. At the conclusion of the first pilot program, the results included suggested improvements within some of the modules, as well as extended the length of the face to face sessions to offer the opportunity for more dialogue and relationship building among faculty and NPD coordinators who share the same experience of being new to role. The forethought into the design of the program has provided a platform for replication and will be repeated each academic year with participants selected by respective leaders from the academic practice partnership team.

## Background

Does nursing continue to recruit the best bedside nurses to the role of educator and expect them to self-navigate the new role? Maybe. All registered nurses equipped to teach patients, but not all nurses are equipped to fulfil the role of nurse educator. Despite the proliferation of masters in nursing with a focus in nursing education program, not all nurses that become educators are prepared for the role. Both academia and practice experience this challenge. On the academic side, the nursing faculty shortage directly impacts nursing program capacity at a time when the current and projected dearth of registered nurses is daunting. Recruitment, orientation, and support of new faculty is essential to retaining them in the nurse faculty position. It is common to hire nurses into academia without academic preparation or experience in education. A literature review on the transition to the nurse educator role identified a number of barriers found commonly in academia including unrealistic expectations, role ambiguity, poor orientation, and inadequate knowledge of educator skills (Fritz, 2018). Both academia and practice have delineated practice standards for respective educator roles:

- National League for Nursing (NLN) has established eight Nurse Educator Core Competencies (Halstead, 2018);
- Association of Nursing Professional Development (ANP) has published the Core Curriculum for Nursing Professional Development (5th ed.)

## Overview of the Academic-Practice Partnership

The Academic-Practice Partnership (APP) was initially formed in 2010. The project team was formed as an initiative of the APP and consisted of members of leadership from both partners. Below is a list of the members and roles within the respective organizations:

Academic Leadership BSMCON	Practice Leadership
Dr. Chris-Tenna Perkins, Associate Dean of Nursing	Carol Gabala, System Director, Nursing Practice & Professional Development
Laura Vasel, RN-BSN Coordinator	Maureen Whiteside, Nursing Professional Development Specialist
Julie Marsh, Coordinator of Distance Education and Instructional Design	Donna Bear, Nursing Professional Development Specialist
Kathy Buckley, Director of Continuing Education and APP Chair	

## Program Development and Implementation

The program consisted of four modules and outcomes that corresponded with each module. Participants were expected to complete each module in succession and were offered over a four month period. The format was hybrid with one hour of an online lesson with responses used to build the 3-hour face to face class with an academic leader and support from a leader from practice. The four modules and associated learning outcomes were:

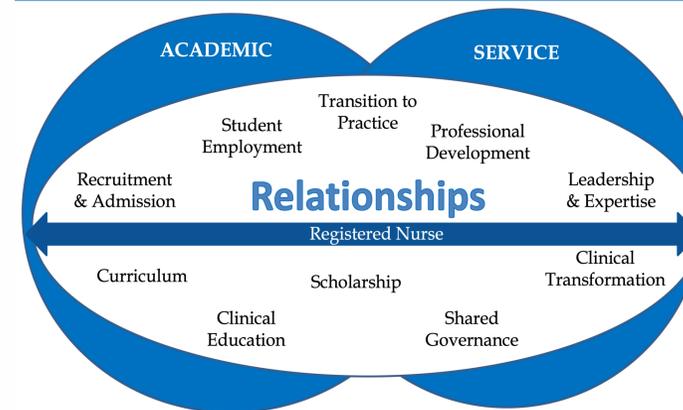
- Curriculum in Nursing – Curriculum concept map,
- Evaluation in Nursing – Test item analysis and evaluation strategy identification,
- Educational Technology – Evaluation of educational technology, and
- Teaching in Nursing- Complete lesson plan and incorporate into overall curriculum concept map.

The program was fully piloted over the course of four months with a one-hour debriefing with participants and facilitators to ensure the needs of both academic faculty and NPD coordinators and specialists would be met.

Participants were awarded 4 CE contact hours for each module for a total of 16 at the completion of the program.



## Bon Secours Academic Practice Partnership Model



(Perkins, 2014)

Module	Satisfaction (5 Point Likert Scale)
Curriculum in Nursing	4.4
Evaluation in Nursing	4.4
Educational Technology	4.6
Teaching in Nursing	4.7
<b>Overall Average</b>	<b>4.5</b>

At the conclusion of each session, participants evaluated the session by rating satisfaction on 12 items with a five point Likert scale with 5 being the most satisfied. There were also four open ended responses describing what they learned and how they intend to apply it in academics or practice. Each participant received Continuing Education Credits for Nursing.

## Conclusion

At the conclusion of the four sessions, the leadership team identified some key takeaways from the interaction with the participants:

- Practice partners in educator roles were extremely engaged
- Common issues emerged that were unexpected by the leaders such as
  - ESL learners
  - Disengaged students
  - Finding time to design and evaluation education.
- There was a desire to continue the joint education and grow the relationships between nursing faculty and Nursing Professional Development Coordinators.

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