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Title: Use of a DNP Essentials-Based Rubric for Guiding the Development of Student DNP Portfolios

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Abstract Summary: A DNP portfolio rubric/guideline that was developed for students to use to help them determine what exemplars to place in their DNP portfolio and that faculty could use to evaluate the quality and applicability of student portfolio documents will be presented.

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Abstract Text:

Purpose: A portfolio is a collection of exemplars that demonstrate expertise or competence in a specific knowledge or skill area (M, H, P, O, 2018). A Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) portfolio can be used by faculty to determine if students meet program outcomes and

competencies outlined in the DNP essentials (Moriber et al., 2014). Portfolios include artifacts selected by students that illustrate achievement of competencies and skills and provide evidence of learning, both for assessment and to illustrate progress in the DNP learning journey (Collins & Crowley, 2016). A DNP portfolio rubric/guideline that was developed for students to use to help them determine what exemplars to place in their DNP portfolio and that faculty could use to evaluate the quality and applicability of student portfolio documents will be presented. The guideline provides criteria to evaluate whether portfolio documents demonstrate the student's achievement of the DNP Essentials (AACN, 2006) at a "developing, proficient, or exceptional" level and includes clear definitions and exemplars of portfolio artifacts at each of the competency levels to ensure a higher quality overall portfolio. Information that a pilot group of students and faculty shared about their experience in using this DNP portfolio guideline will be discussed.

Methods: A descriptive, comparative, IRB approved study, using a REDCap survey was used to learn about student and faculty opinions about the use of the DNP portfolio guideline. A separate survey that was applicable to students and faculty was developed and used in this study.

Results: Three students and faculty completed the initial DNP portfolio evaluation. Students and faculty felt the guideline was somewhat helpful to helpful in assisting students build their portfolio and identify exemplars for their portfolio. Students and faculty both agreed that the developmental categories used in the guideline (developing/proficient/exceptional) were an accurate reflection of the student's level of progress in the program. All students felt that referencing the guideline during meeting sessions with their advisor added value to the discussion. A strategy for gaining more value from use of the guideline, per the opinion of students, was to have faculty incorporate information in course syllabi related to which assignments addressed specific essentials and work with students in specific courses to help them evaluate the quality of their work in relation to the portfolio expectations.

Conclusion: The DNP essentials help maintain consistency across DNP programs (Brown et al, 2013), but they are complex and detailed. This pilot evaluation illustrated that a DNP portfolio guide can be helpful to both students and faculty in helping students create a well-designed portfolio that demonstrates their competencies with the DNP essentials. A portfolio rubric/guideline also can be a valuable tool to help clarify the meaning of the essentials and to highlight exemplars that are applicable to each essential. A portfolio guideline can be used to help students improve their portfolio as they move through the program, in that less quality work can be replaced by exceptional work, which demonstrates student growth, learning, and program development (M, H, P, O, 2018).