

Creating Healthy Work Environments VIRTUAL 2021

Leadership in Academia During a Pandemic

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Purpose: To describe how leadership at the department, college, and university levels enabled nursing faculty to provide quality education through online learning and simulation during a pandemic.

Methods: Nursing practice and education have faced many challenges during their history. The COVID-19 pandemic of Spring 2020 was a first of its type and magnitude for many generations of nurses. Pandemics provide different perspectives and challenges for leadership at the all levels. Barton, Murray, and Spurlock (2020) found that flexibility, adaptability, and kindness are necessary during this time. Caroselli (2020) determined that leadership in a pandemic requires setting the right tone, offering assurance, and communicating a shared sense of purpose. During turbulent times, Hertel (2020) emphasizes that leaders must maintain trust by being visible, providing perspective, and setting clear expectations. Leadership at all levels during this pandemic set this tone.

Collaborative teamwork between the faculty, staff, and leadership ensured successful strategies that allowed students to complete the semester without delay and supported faculty and staff needs. Huddles were used by nursing leaders to provide daily communication. Though not typically utilized in academia, huddles have been used by health systems and other organizations with positive communication results (Castaldi, 2019; Chapman et al., 2020; Donnelly et al., 2016; Glymph et al., 2015; Johnson, 2018; Townsend, McNulty, & Grillo-Peck, 2017). Weekly huddles and online meetings with administration proved to be crucial to the success of students and the college during the transition. Task forces were also established to address concerns and engage faculty and staff in decision-making.

Results: Task forces and weekly huddles aided in addressing the challenge of moving didactic courses from in-person to online in a short period of time and in developing a virtual simulation plan that met the Board of Nursing (BON) and International Nursing Association for Clinical and Learning (INASCL, 2016) guidelines. Students expressed

feeling encouraged, supported, and confident in clinical decision making and reasoning skills. Faculty reported satisfaction with ease of transition to online classroom and virtual clinical experiences.

Conclusion: Solid leadership, collaborative teamwork, and clear, transparent communication equipped a College of Nursing to successfully navigate the challenges faced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Title:

Leadership in Academia During a Pandemic

Keywords:

Collaboration, Leadership and Teamwork

Abstract Summary:

This presentation describes how leadership at the department, college, and university levels enabled nursing faculty to provide quality education through online learning and simulation during a pandemic.

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