Enhancing Nursing Education: Mentoring Partnerships

Sigma Theta Tau International’s 26th International Nursing Research 2015

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Purpose
The purpose of this research is to explore mentoring relationships with graduate nursing students. By using action research we can define a collaborative partnership supporting the positive social construction of mentoring. In defining what works in building a collaborative relationship we can affect student growth as scholar-practitioners.

Importance
Graduate nursing students need to have mentors to help guide them through the process and importance of learning. Thus, students require nurturing relationships, to enhance scholar-practitioner development. Effective mentoring takes time and intent in the form of a structured process to support students as they matriculate through graduate education programs. This type of relationship can promote professional development and entry into doctoral programs, supporting overall enhancement of the nursing profession and ultimately our patient outcomes.

Theory
With the use of the Coordinated Management of Meaning (CMM), a theory based in social construction, we can explore the dynamics of the mentoring relationship within the framework of communication. This can increase understanding of the complexities of relationship building and how this relationship can then propel students towards potential innovation, successful knowledge synthesis and the ability to take positive relationship development into their professional environments.

Method
To effect change in the mentoring relationship we can use CMM to develop an Action research project to define a collaborative partnership that supports positive social construction of the mentoring relationship. By using student and faculty perspectives to define what works in building a collaborative relationship we can affect student growth as scholar-practitioners. This information will be disseminated in the form of a new faculty course to help faculty develop as mentors creating collaborative relationship with students.

Results
The research is in progress and will be completed Fall 2015.