

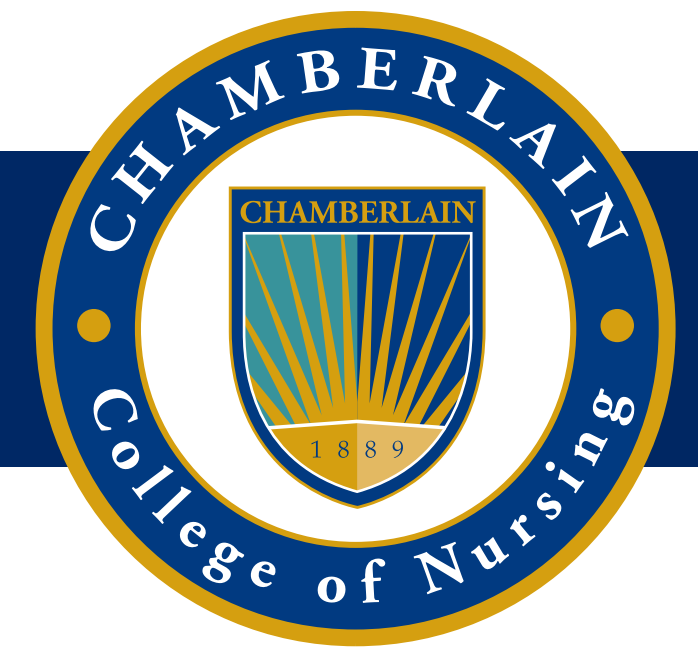
NURSING ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP – LEARNING FROM THE PAST, PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE – A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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Introduction

Not only is there a shortage of qualified nursing faculty, the dearth of top nursing academic leaders is real and threatens the growth and stability of nursing education. Upper-level nursing academic leaders are essential to maintain sound nursing education programs, continue building nursing as a profession, advocate for nurse and patient safety and develop healthcare policy. A systematic review of current literature was analyzed to answer the questions:

1. What has been learned related to strengthening and planning for quality nursing academic leadership?
2. What components are needed to assist in planning for next steps in preparation of prospective nursing academic leaders?

Methodology

The Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL) was the primary database utilized in gathering literature for this review. The following search terms used included combinations of: *leadership, academia, nursing education, deans, directors, chairs, mentoring, succession planning, strategic planning and leadership development*. Journal articles published in the last 11 years, between 2005 and 2016, were reviewed. The CINAHL search identified 25 articles from which 15 provided information about the characteristics of academic nursing leaders and suggestions regarding succession planning for academic leaders in nursing.

Conclusions

Findings: Several articles focus on the difficulties associated with the nursing academic leadership role, and not on the positive aspects of leadership in academia.

Recommendations: Early identification of highly capable individuals, the implementation of formal mentorship support from organizations, identification of clearly defined pathways to leadership, presentation of positive views of nursing education administration and the creation of pathways and support systems.

Findings

Academic nurse leaders must:

1. Be proficient in lead multi-generational groups at varying levels of experience in nursing education
2. Possess political acumen in the ability to educate and communicate needs of students and faculty to senior level administration and local government officials
3. Be knowledgeable about planning, monitoring and analyzing budgets as well as be able to visualize future needs and expectations
4. Be current with trends in research, business, health law, education, health/disease trends and clinical practice
5. Have the ability to understand statistical data and use the evidence as a basis for decision-making
6. Possess personal qualities that allow for maintaining close connections to health care organizations and professional nursing organizations
7. Participate on committees, task forces, and local, national and international boards

Current issues facing the present-day nursing education leaders include: the faculty shortage, increased licensure requirements and rigor, increasing cost of program maintenance, global environment, technological advancement, inter-generational dynamics and changes in healthcare environment for clinical partners.

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