Creating a Collaborative Academic Culture for Successful Scholarship in Nursing Faculty

Wendy Carter Kooken, PhD, RN
Amanda F. Hopkins, PhD, RN
Disclosure

Wendy Carter Kooken, PhD, RN, Illinois Wesleyan University, School of Nursing
Amanda F Hopkins, PhD, RN, Illinois Wesleyan University, School of Nursing

➢ The authors have no significant relationships or financial support to disclose
Learner Objectives

- The learner will identify barriers to successful nurse faculty scholarship
- The learner will discuss strategies to facilitate nursing faculty scholarship
Background

- Achieving tenure in academic settings is difficult
  - Academic settings have numerous, often differing requirements per institution for achieving tenure

- Scholarship is often the most difficult to achieve
Problem

- **Time**
  - 5–15 years to develop a program of scholarship and master teaching
  - Little time allocated for scholarship
    - especially true at smaller universities

- Small, non-research intensive academic institutions lend difficulties for successful scholarship

- **Education and Experience**
  - Master’s degree and/or DNP vs. PhD preparation
Solution?

- Peer mentoring, coaching and collaboration
  - blends various faculty members’ strengths
  - assists in setting realistic goals
  - promotes accountability
  - reduces incidences of incivility
  - potential to positively impact faculty recruitment and retention
Purpose

- Describe experiences in which faculty share their scholarly pursuits, resources, research strengths, and experiences
Think Tank

 Origins
  ◦ Rooted in PhD training grant experience

 Structure and Format
  ◦ 2 year, monthly, 1-hour gathering
  ◦ Faculty and staff invited
  ◦ Scholarly pursuits, resources, research strengths, and experiences shared

 Involvement
Think Tank Outcomes

- Literature suggests peer mentoring:
  - Increases accountability
  - Improves recruitment or retention
  - Decreases incivility
Accountability

“…helped keep me accountable for projects I am working on.”

“…the intentionality with which I plan and continue to re-prioritize decisions about my scholarship on a regular basis, I believe, is because of the feeling of accountability to the group.”
Decrease Incivility and Promote Relationships

“..opened up an awareness for colleagues to know what each other is working on and their successes.”

Prior to Think Tank, “I felt as though I was working in a silo which resulted in me feeling unproductive and unmotivated.”

“Partnering with other faculty on scholarship.” [benefits of participating]
Productivity and Sense of Accomplishment

“Since Think Tank began, I have had 2 articles, 1 grant and 3 presentations submitted and accepted.”

“It's nice to have others to bounce ideas off of and determine which journals/conferences to target.”

“…satisfaction of seeing each of my small steps toward implementation, completion and dissemination of my work being witnessed and validated by the group.”
“Think Tank has improved my scholarship. An example this last year is with Honors research when I did not know the order of handling IRB and producing my own surveys.”

“I get so much research support. I leave with more energy to devote to my project, and the belief that it is doable and worthwhile.”
Recruitment

“While the Think Tank was not by itself a deciding factor in my decision, it was attractive. I did want to work at a school that supported and encouraged scholarship among faculty...Think Tank demonstrated an intent among faculty to engage in scholarship.”

“Yes! Think Tank was a factor in choosing to work at IWU. I was very excited about this concept!”
Additional benefits

- Comfortable area to express feelings
  - “..empathetic listeners..”

- Food
  - “I don’t have to pack a lunch or go fetch it.”

- Campus visibility of departmental collaboration and relationship building

- Grants manager updated monthly

- Addition to CV
Think Tank Challenges

- Time
  - Coordinating schedules
    - Providing lunch is beneficial

- Curb your enthusiasm

- Lack of staff attendance
  - Feelings of “not really invited”
  - Intimidation
  - Differing availability
Discussion

- Think Tank elicited positive feedback
- Peer mentoring:
  - improves accountability
  - decreases incivility
  - decreases isolation
  - contributes to recruitment
- Additionally, Think Tank contributes to:
  - a sense of accomplishment
  - being valued
  - networking
Future Direction

- Web based reports
- Rotating faculty highlights
- Director’s attendance
- Article highlight
  - each meeting
  - various sources
Conclusions

- Peer mentoring can be efficiently and effectively implemented with positive results without increased burden

- Support from administration leads to success

- Point people facilitate organization, direction and motivation
References


Questions?

Contact Information
Wendy Carter Kooken, PhD, RN
Assistant Professor
wkooken@iwu.edu
309–556–3204

Amanda F Hopkins, PhD, RN
Assistant Professor
ahopkins@iwu.edu
309–556–3832