Title:
Creating a Collaborative Academic Culture for Successful Scholarship in Nursing Faculty

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Session Title:
Nursing Academia: Retaining Faculty Through Recruitment and Peer Mentoring

Keywords:
collaborative academic culture, faculty scholarship and peer mentoring

References:

Abstract Summary:
This presentation will identify barriers to successful nurse faculty scholarship in small nursing programs. Specific recommendations and strategies to promote nurse faculty scholarship are discussed and exemplars and outcomes are presented.

Learning Activity:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The learner will identify barriers to successful nurse faculty scholarship.</td>
<td>Problem statement Background on tenure requirements, faculty preparation, and difficulties in achieving scholarship.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The learner will discuss successful strategies to improve nursing faculty scholarship</td>
<td>Review of literature on peer mentoring. Presentation of successful project with outcomes. Recommendations and strategies. Conclusion. Audience questions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Abstract Text:

Pursuit of tenure is an arduous task. Expectations for tenure include achieving excellence in teaching, service, and scholarship. While different schools have varying requirements for tenure, one of the most difficult to achieve is scholarship. Scholarship at small, undergraduate schools of nursing is often a daunting task. At such institutions, teaching is often the primary focus and expectation, making completion of scholarship that much more difficult because of lack of time and resources. Many faculty, although PhD-prepared, find the transition to faculty responsibilities overwhelming and often take 5-15 years to develop a program of scholarship and master teaching (Heinrich & Oberleitner, 2012). Additionally, more tenure track faculty are being hired with master's degrees or doctorates of nursing practice, and in their education, research was not a foundation so they are unprepared for the rigors of scholarship to achieve tenure (Oermann, Lynn, & Agger, 2015). Therefore, academic environments, particularly at small universities are becoming increasingly complex, producing barriers for faculty to achieve success in scholarship.
Although many institutions have modified versions of what is expected for tenure, scholarship at some level remains a valued obligation. In smaller academic settings, each faculty member may have diverse areas of research, leading to a lack of collaborative possibilities and contributing to feelings of isolation. Faculty are busy, especially in schools of nursing, with clinical courses at a variety of sites. There is little time to spend with other faculty members brainstorming and developing well-rounded relationships, particularly ones that enhance other’s scholarship obligations and promote collaboration on scholarship with one another. Peer mentoring and blending various faculty members’ strengths can help faculty members realize success by setting realistic goals, promoting accountability, perhaps improving faculty recruitment and retention (Heinrich & Oberleitner, 2012), and reducing incidences of incivility (Bostian Peters, 2014).

The purpose of this presentation is to describe a 2 year, monthly, 1-hour faculty gathering (Think Tank) in which faculty share their scholarly pursuits, resources, research strengths, and experiences.

Results of the Think Tank project indicate successful outcomes in producing scholarly accomplishments. Compared to scholarly achievements before Think Tank, collaborative projects among faculty increased. Publications and peer-reviewed national and international presentations saw significant growth. Faculty applications for internal and external funding also expanded. Successful strategies to engage faculty are described and successful outcomes are highlighted.