An Innovative DNP Academic Advising Model: Meeting Students Needs and Streamlining Faculty Efforts

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Doctoral Students Need Advice

- Plan their curriculum
- Manage school-life-work balance
- Develop the DNP project
- Meet the DNP Essentials competencies
- Transition into the role of a nurse-leader

(AACN, 2015; Hande, Beuscher, Allison, Phillippi, 2016)
Purpose

Design a **DNP-specific academic advising model** to assist DNP faculty to meet student needs and streamline faculty effort.
Background

Disconnect between established advising and the needs of DNP students and programs contribute to dissatisfaction among faculty and program directors (Dols, Hernandez, & Miles, 2016)
Background

National survey of DNP program directors found high rates of faculty dissatisfaction with the process surrounding the project and student advising (Dols, Hernandez, & Miles, 2016)
Background

DNP faculty survey demonstrated a need for a new advising model to preserve faculty time and foster student satisfaction and achievement (VUSN, August 2016)
Background

Guidance can take many forms. **AACN does not stipulate or recommend a single model of advising** (AACN, 2015).
Background

Common models of DNP advising are antiquated or inefficient. New team based models based on existing models of advising may streamline doctoral education and boost preparation for nurse-leader roles.

(Read, Hicks, & Christenbery, 2016)
Appreciative Advising Defined

“Intentional collaborative practice of asking positive, open-ended questions that help students optimize their educational experiences and achieve their dreams, goals, and potentials.”

(Bloom, Hutson, & He, 2008)
Six Stages of Appreciative Advising

**Disarm**
- Recognizing the importance of first impressions, create a safe, welcoming environment for students

**Discover**
- Utilize positive open-ended questions to draw out what they enjoy doing, their strengths, and their passions.

**Dream**
- Help students formulate a vision of what they might become, and then assist them in developing their life and career goals

**Design**
- Help students devise concrete, incremental, and achievable goals

**Deliver**
- Believe in students every step of the way and help them continue to update and refine their dreams as they go

**Don’t Settle**
- Challenge students to proactively raise their internal bar of self-expectations

(Bloom, Hutson, & He, 2008)
Nursing faculty convened a task force to adapt the Appreciative Advising model to the DNP program

- Streamline the advising process
- Create supportive communities of scholars
- Increase faculty consistency during project process
- Provide opportunities for students to observe faculty/nurse-leaders model effective mentoring and advising
- Develop students’ advanced competencies for increasingly complex practice, faculty, and leadership roles
The DNP-specific model contains four major components:

- Advising process aligned with the six stages of AA (Disarm, Discover, Dream, Design, Deliver, and Don’t Settle)
- Individual advising
- Group meetings
- Faculty selection and preparedness
# Advising Process Alignment with the Six Stages of Appreciative Advising

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<td>Schedule a minimum of 3 meetings per semester, at least 1 for group advising and 2 for individual advising</td>
<td>Correlate with times of increased student inquiries and stress, allowing the adviser to intervene in a timely manner</td>
<td>Assess students’ strengths and plan for anticipated struggles</td>
<td>Employ student’s noted strengths to reach personal goals and manage possible challenges</td>
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Individual Advising

► Reflective questionnaires
► Knowing the student as a person
► Genuine interest in student’s growth and development
► Targeted resources in response to identified needs
Group Meetings

► Communication
► Creation of a scholarly community
► An opportunity to observe group leadership
Faculty Selection and Preparedness

- Consistent faculty who teach the DNP project courses
- Deep knowledge of the curriculum and understanding of program’s rigor
- Faculty familiar with common student struggles
Implications for Nursing Education

► Evidence-based, student-centered, innovative approach
► Versatile and adaptable to meet the students’ requirements and expectations
► Student-sensitive framework that faculty and students can adapt to any student situation
► Framework for faculty to advise students through the rigors of doctoral education
Future Research

► Further research is needed to evaluate effects of this innovative model

► Pilot study
  — August 2016 – December 2017
  — Full-time students
  — Questionnaires for students and faculty
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► Tom Christenbery, PhD, RN
References


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