ABSTRACT
The critical shortage of nursing faculty is far-reaching, with the lack of qualified nurse educators impacting the number of students schools of nursing can admit (AACN, 2017). Doctoral-prepared nurses can help address this shortage, but these educators need support in the faculty role because their education may not have prepared them for the expectations of academia, depending on the content of the program they attended. The purpose of this study was to explore doctoral prepared nurse educators’ perception of their confidence in their preparedness for the faculty role. The researchers were seeking to identify challenges in the academic role faced by doctoral-prepared faculty members. Findings indicated that there was significant differences in teaching preparedness of DNPs and PhDs. PhD prepared faculty felt more prepared than DNP prepared faculty. The challenges identified by the faculty included scholarship and maintaining clinical practice.

INTRODUCTION
Background: Preparation for the Doctor of Nurse Practice (DNP) role focuses on application and practice. The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree prepares nurse scientists to conduct research and discover new knowledge in nursing (AACN, 2010; Melnyk, 2013). Both degrees do not necessarily prepare nurses to teach nursing, since nursing education courses are not typically included in nursing degrees unless the program has an emphasis on nursing education (Dreifusert et al., 2016). Some schools are divided on whether DNP-prepared faculty are prepared to teach nursing, but most agree that they are not prepared for the research expectations in academia, particularly in universities and Carnegie Level I Research institutions (Agger, Oermann & Lynn, 2014; Oermann, Lynn & Agger, 2016). The literature demonstrates the lack of confidence in their preparedness for the faculty role.

Demographics
- Sample: 242 doctoral-prepared nurse educators.
- Average Age: 55.04 years (sd = 10.122).
- Average Years of Teaching: 15.34 years (sd = 10.773)

Research Questions Answered
1) Do doctoral-prepared faculty feel prepared to teach in a School of Nursing?
   - Seventy-seven percent (n = 220) felt prepared to teach; 22% (n = 22) did not feel prepared.
   - To compare type of education and participants’ preparation to teach, a Chi Square analysis indicated a significant interaction between the variables (X² = 242) = 87.0999, p < .05.
   - To determine if differences existed between type of doctoral degree and participants’ mean score on the Teaching Preparedness Instrument - ANOVA results indicated a significant difference between the groups (F = 8.560 (2), p = .000).
   - Dunnet's T3 post hoc test was used due to unequal variances; significant differences between DNP and PhD scores (p = .001) were found. Mean PhD group scores were higher (M = 92.7338) than the DNP group (M = 88.0488); difference is statistically significant. PhD prepared participants are more confident in their preparation to teach.
2) Challenges doctoral-prepared faculty face in the teaching role?
   - Table below presents these challenges. Themes identified in the Other category: bullying/negative political climate of teaching environment, unprepared students, workload balance/management issues (scholarly productivity, university responsibilities) and preparing for accreditation.

METHODS AND MATERIALS
- Baccalaureate and graduate nurse educators with a doctoral degree who teach in CCNE-accredited programs in seven southern US states were invited to participate by email.
- Two researcher-developed questionnaires, which included a demographic data sheet and a researcher-developed Perceptions of Nurse Educators Tool, were used for data collection.
- The 22-item instrument explored nurse educators’ perceptions regarding their confidence in performing teaching responsibilities upon assuming a faculty position. Questions addressed common issues a nurse faculty member encounters, including test construction, student advising, and professional and scholarly activity. Participants were asked to rate their perception of how confident they feel in completing teaching responsibilities. The Likert scale ranges from 0 “Cannot Do at All”, to 100 “Highly Certain Can Do”.

RESULTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scholarly Productivity</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>58.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining Clinical Practice</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>38.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test Construction</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>34.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure Responsibilities</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>32.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test evaluation/analysis</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Revision</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee Responsibilities</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative support</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Development</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Support</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Management</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Service</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>90.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS
- Results found significant differences between PhD and DNPs preparedness to teach. PhD prepared faculty felt more prepared than DNP prepared faculty.
- These results support previous research on preparation for the faculty role. Faculty with both degrees may feel prepared to teach, but DNP faculty have more difficulty with scholarly requirements for tenure due to lack of preparation in conducting research (Booth, Emerson, Hackney & Souter, 2016; Nicholas & Dyer, 2012; Bellini, McCauley & Cusson, 2012).
- The challenges of the teaching role faced by participants were similar to those identified by Smeltzer et al. (2014), which included challenges with maintaining scholarship and work-life balance.

RECOMMENDATIONS
- Repeat the study with a larger sample including more DNP prepared nurse educators.
- Because of the significant difference between PhDs and DNPs’ perception of preparation to teach, DNP programs could include more coursework related to nursing education for those who may eventually want to teach.
- Develop a comprehensive mentoring program for new faculty to assist in transitioning into the educator role.

REFERENCES