

Diversity Poster and Presentation: Blending Diversity, Scholarship and Evidence Based Practice into Scholarly Work for Nurse Practitioner Students

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Abstract

Nurse practitioner faculty often struggle to create innovative ways to integrate core curriculum concepts into the clinical didactic courses. Cultural diversity, Evidenced Based Practice (EBP) and scholarship are critical components of the academic curriculum for Nurse Practitioner (NP) students who are nearing graduation. Evaluating student comprehension and utilization of these concepts can be challenging and time consuming. The Diversity Poster and Presentation Activity (DPPA) is intended to synthesize knowledge gained throughout the NP curriculum, illustrate clinical experiences and disseminate that knowledge to peers, faculty, and the professional community. The DPPA interlaces the student clinical experience with relevant curriculum based core concepts that culminates in a presentation that aims to enhance knowledge of peers and community healthcare providers in one assignment. Creating an innovative learning activity is especially beneficial when it can combine multiple concepts while creating a product that can also disseminate the knowledge. These skills, content knowledge, and scholarship project will benefit the student professionally and clinically and enhance future employment opportunities. The ability to intertwine core advanced practice nursing concepts into clinical content is challenging, but can be incredibly rewarding for educators, students and the community as evident by the success of the DPAA.

Keywords: Nurse practitioner education; Diversity; Evidenced based practice; Student poster presentations

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Introduction

Cultural diversity, Evidenced Based Practice (EBP) and scholarship are critical components of the academic curriculum for Nurse Practitioner (NP) students who are nearing graduation. NP programs incorporate core content associated with leadership, policy, EBP, health promotion, disease prevention, theory, informatics, quality and safety, pathology, pharmacology and physical assessment [1]. Comprehensively integrating core content in scholarly projects can be a challenge, however an important feature in preparing students for clinical practice and professional employment roles [2]. Preparing future NPs for the workforce require innovative learning strategies to create unique, experiential, and interactive clinical learning activities which can have a lasting impact [3]. The ability to combine cultural diversity,

leadership, and EBP concepts with a clinical practice assignment motivated the development of a professional scholarship project that can be disseminated to the healthcare community [4].

Diversity Poster and Presentation Activity

The Diversity Poster and Presentation Activity (DPPA) is intended to synthesize knowledge gained throughout the NP curriculum, illustrate clinical experiences and disseminate that knowledge to peers, faculty, and the professional community. The DPPA depicts the student experience with relevant curriculum based knowledge that culminates in a presentation that aims to enhance knowledge of peers and community healthcare providers. The DPPA is divided into three sections: The Rapid Critical Appraisal

(RCA), the poster, and the presentation. The student is required to identify a specific societal or women's health care concern of a diverse population that is of interest and ideally an assigned population in their clinical setting. The student will conduct a literature search based on a relevant clinical topic and develop a professional poster. The poster is presented in class to faculty, peers and members of the healthcare community. Many of the presentations are also presented at local and regional conferences.

The students are asked to choose three of the most interesting and helpful articles from their literature search and perform a critical appraisal of each article using the rapid critical appraisal checklist template found in the appendix of "Evidence-based practice in nursing and healthcare: a guide to best practice" [5-8]. In addition to the checklist, students are instructed to write explanations of each checklist item to demonstrate rationale. The faculty request that the completed RCA checklist and the appraised articles are submitted electronically one month prior to the due date of the poster so that constructive feedback can be provided. This segment of the assignment not only integrates the concept of EBP but also allows students to practice the skills of searching the literature and of appraising the research.

For many graduate students, this will be their first experience with creating a scholarly poster. Assigned reading and examples of scholarly posters demonstrating key elements are essential for a student to produce a successful product. The students are given a faculty designed PowerPoint poster template as a guide. A rubric is provided with grading criteria for the style and content requirements for both the poster presentation and verbal presentation. The professional poster criteria that the faculty valued focused on overall appearance, organization and appropriate flow of content. Examples of poster criteria from the rubric included use of text and pictures, spelling and grammar, lack of clutter, appropriate charts, lack of extraneous pieces', and the ability to move through the poster with ease. The content the faculty valued and that the students were expected to present included a list of the following:

- Describe the population you chose and why. How it relevant to your professional practice?
- Statement of the health care need for this diverse population.
- Present highlights from your literature search.

- Describe the current community services available in your clinical community.
- Describe potential interventions you could implement in your setting.

Students present the poster for 10 min to their peers and are evaluated on the professional standards of eye contact, body language, preparation, and ability to answer questions. The rubric also provides expectations and feedback for speaking style and delivery of presentation. The students are expected to present the poster at a local conference and options are made availability to the students within the university and community. Recently, the faculties have partnered with the state ACNM chapter and the students are included in their poster session during their annual meeting and conference. Reduced fee for the students have been negotiated which some students take advantage, while other students carpool and drive back and forth to the conference within a day limiting the financial burden.

Titles of previous scholarly products include "Amish Women and Cervical Cancer Screening", "Contractive Counseling needs of Practicing Catholics", "Birth Plan Preferences of Somalin Women", and "Lesbian Women and Infertility" [9,10]. Feedback from community providers and preceptors at the conference has been positive citing professional networking and the clinical dialogue as the major cornerstones of the student's involvement. Faculty continues to fine tune this activity every academic year, but are extremely gratified with the quality RCA, posters and presentations produced. In the last three years 41 students have presented their posters at a poster session at the Association of Certified Nurse Midwives Regional Meeting.

Conclusion and Future Opportunities

The Diversity Poster and Presentation activity enables the NP student to use knowledge from core content, practice the skills taught, and integrate the concepts of diversity, leadership, and EBP into a clinical scholarly project. Creating an innovative learning activity is especially beneficial when it can combine multiple concepts while creating a product that can also disseminate the knowledge. These skills, content knowledge, and scholarship project will be beneficial to the student professionally and clinically and enhance future employment opportunities. The ability to intertwine core nursing concepts into clinical content is challenging [11,12], but can be incredibly rewarding for educators, students and the community as evident by this activity.

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