Towson University's Online Option for Degree Completion: Professional Development for Faculty

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Briana L. Snyder, PhD, RN-BC, CNE
Hayley Mark, PhD, RN, FAAN
Elizabeth P. Crusse, MS, MA, RN, CNE

TU TOWSON UNIVERSITY™

Objectives

Following this presentation, the audience will be able to

- Describe benefits of online nursing programs

- Identify sources of professional development opportunities for nursing faculty who teach online

- Discuss benefits & challenges of faculty participation in professional development opportunities for online teaching

Background

- Number of online nursing programs has increased in recent years (AACN, 2020)

- Online nursing programs & courses improve access for a variety of groups (e.g., working students, students living in rural areas, students who are caregivers, students with disabilities, etc.) (Grabinger, 2010; Tate, 2017)

- Excellence in face-to-face (F2F) teaching does not always translate into excellence in online teaching (Reneau et al., 2018)

- MHEC NSP II grant funding received to convert F2F Associates-to-Bachelors (ATB) nursing courses into an online format & provide professional development for nursing faculty teaching online

Methods & Results

- Online professional development opportunities for nursing faculty
  - Towson University Online Edge Certification (TU OEC) - Internal
  - Quality Matters® Peer Reviewer Certification (QM PRC) - External
- Adjunct faculty who completed one of the above certificates received a stipend paid from MHEC NSP II grant with a commitment to teach 1 course in the next academic year
- <u>Initial Goal</u>: By end of 3-year grant, TU OEC completed by 9 faculty & QM PRC completed by 3 faculty

Grant Year	# of Faculty Who Completed TU OEC	# of Faculty Who Completed QM PRC
Year One (AY 2018-2019)	11	3
Year Two (AY 2019-2020)	18	0
Year Three (AY 2020-2021)	Ongoing professional development	
Running Total	**29** (16 adjunct & 13 full time)	**3** (3 full time)

- Exceeded initial goal with one year remaining in the grant

Conclusions

Benefits

- Increased # of online nursing courses
- Increased nursing program enrollment capacity
- Increased flexibility for students to complete program requirements
- Increased # and diversity of faculty prepared to teach online

Challenges

- Time management (e.g., managing regular workload plus online training)
- Limited capacity in TU OEC and QM PRC courses – waiting list

Future Implications

- Valuable for unforeseen challenges & circumstances (e.g., COVID-19 pandemic)
- Potential to improve quality & rigor of online teaching & learning
- Potential to improve access for a diverse array of students

Acknowledgements

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