Where Are We Five Years Later? A Program Evaluation of the DCO

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MDAC 2020 Summit
NSPII 16-118
Objectives

At the end of this presentation, participants will be able to:

1. Identify accomplishments obtained over the past five years as a result of the NSPII grant for the Degree Completion Initiative.
2. Describe the findings of the external review of the Degree Completion Option from the admission process to student graduation.
Overview of Grant Accomplishments

- Increased the number of students participating in ATB option from 17 (2012) to 452 (spring 2020)
- Added four community college partners for ATB option
- Offered Degree Completion option on two campuses – Towson and Towson University NorthEast (TUNE)
- Increased faculty (adjunct and full-time) to meet increasing numbers of course sections offered as a result of student growth
- Attended numerous professional conferences with focus on nursing education as participants and presenters
- Assisted faculty in earning CNE and CNEcl certification
- Graduated an increasing number of baccalaureate-prepared nurses to help ease nursing shortage experienced in Maryland
- Hired external consultant (Dr. Anne Brett) to evaluate the Degree Completion Option from student admission to graduation
Consultant Findings - Strengths

- Offered two tracks (ATB and RN-to-BS) for students to complete baccalaureate education
- Active partnerships with five community colleges for ATB option
- Facilitated seamless transition from associate degree to baccalaureate degree
- Received full accreditation from CCNE and MBON in November 2018
- Student learning outcomes and baccalaureate coursework align with current AACN Baccalaureate Essentials
- Awarded NSPII 16-118 grant to enhance Degree Completion Initiative of increasing the number of BS/BSN prepared nurses in Maryland
Consultant Findings - Suggestions

• Review student outcomes and begin to align to proposed Baccalaureate Essentials
• Create course/syllabus template to provide curricular consistency
• Align curriculum to QSEN competencies – quality and safety is a proposed Baccalaureate Essential
• Explore assessment strategies within the Degree Completion courses – less exam driven and more application and analysis of concepts
• Enhance opportunities for experiential learning in final Community/Public Health and Leadership courses following guidelines from AACN 2012 White Paper (Expectations for Practice Experiences in the RN to Baccalaureate Curriculum)
Next Steps...

- Review consultant’s findings with appropriate individuals to determine potential revisions to Degree Completion Option as suggested by consultant.
- Collaborate with small group of partner community college administrators to discuss consultant findings and develop opportunities for enhancing Degree Completion Option with TU.
- Seek opportunities to present consultant’s findings and suggestions as well as accomplishments of the Degree Completion Initiative at various forums.

_Towson University gratefully thanks the Maryland Higher Education Commission for the extension of NSPII grant 16-118 through AY 2020-2021._