

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

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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

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