

---

# The State of the State with DNP Projects: An Integrative Review

Joanne Fletcher, EdD, RN, ACM-RN

Rene Love, PhD, DNP, PMHNP, FAANP

Kerry Milner, DScN, RN

Margie Sipe, DNP, RN, NEA-BC

Cindy Zellefrow, DNP, MEd, RN, LSN, PHNA-BC



# Project Origin

## **October 2017**

Question Posted on AACN Discussion Board re: DNP project teams

-61 replies representing 44 Colleges/Universities

## **December 2017**

Conference call with DNP Faculty from across the United States

-Over 40 faculty participated; Topic generated tremendous interest and passionate discussion

## **January 2018**

Session held at AACN Doctoral Education Conference . Approximately 50 conference attendees participated in the 7am meeting

-2 subgroups were formed; Literature Review group and Survey Development Group

## **Spring/Summer 2018**

Integrative Review conducted to inform creation of survey for national study on DNP project teams and group vs. individual projects

# Integrative Review: Guiding Questions

## FRAMEWORK FOR INQUIRY: AACN 2015 White Paper

### Guiding questions:

1. What is the name of the DNP project?
2. Who makes up the DNP project team?
3. Individual vs. group projects?
4. Have the recommendations from the AACN August 2015 report from the Task Force on the Implementation of the DNP project been adopted?



# Search Strategy

**Sources Searched: Databases;** CINHALL, PubMed, Medline, Scopus, Web of Science, Cochrane Library, Trip, Google Scholar: **Also searched text books and gray literature**

**Search Terms:** Doctor of Nursing Practice, and DNP.

Each of the following terms was searched by itself, then with “Doctor of Nursing Practice” and “DNP” preceding it:

Project	Advisor
Capstone	Committee Chair
Dissertation	Project team
Scholarly project	Committee
Group project	Scholarly Project Team

**Boolean Operators:**

- AND
- OR



## Identifying Our Body of Evidence: Methods

- 40 pieces of literature identified
- 27 articles included
- Each article critically appraised by two appraisers and disparities resolved with third appraiser
- Evaluation/summary table created and housed on cloud-based platform for accessibility by the team
- Earliest piece of literature: 2001; no date on two pieces of literature
- 8 articles published prior to AACN White Paper; 17 published on or after 2015
- **Levels of Evidence** (Melnik & Fineout-Overholt, 2014):
  - Level 6 (Single qualitative or descriptive studies): n=5
  - Level 7 (Expert Opinion): n=22



# Results: Articles Addressing the DNP Project Team Name and Name of Team Leader

## DNP Project Name (n=15)

- **Pre AACN August 2015 White Paper**
  - Committee (n=2)
  - Supervisory Committee (n=1)
- **Post AACN August 2015 White Paper**
  - DNP Project Team \* (n=6)
  - Project Committee (n=1)
  - Faculty/Community Project Team (n=1)
  - Team (n=2)
  - Capstone Supervisory Team (n=2)



## Name of Team Leader (n=17)

- **Both Pre and Post August 2015 AACN White Paper**
  - Chair (n=8)
  - Lead (n=2)
- **Post August 2015 AACN White Paper**
  - Mentor\* (n=3)
  - Advisor\* (n=2)
  - Reader: (n=1)
  - Coordinator (n=1)

\* AACN recommended language

# Results: Number of Team Members and Credentials & Individual vs. Group Projects

## Number of Team Members (n=13)

- 1 plus student(s) n=1
- 2-3 plus student(s) n=7
  - 2 articles recommend 2-3 plus students but may vary based on project needs
- Defined by needs of project n=5

## Credentials of Team members (n=12)

- “Doctorally Prepared” \* N=2
- PhD N=4
- DNP N=6

## No Credentials Specified (n=11)

- For faculty team members N=6
- For community team members N=5

\* AACN recommended language

## Individual vs. Group Projects

- Literature focused on group advising versus students doing group projects
- Group projects mentioned in two pieces of literature
  - Individual or student group projects (AACN, 2015)
  - Survey of DNP programs done: 20 schools mention group projects (Minnick, 2013)



---

# Contact Us!

**Joanne Fletcher EdD RN**  
[joanne.f.fletcher@wilmu.edu](mailto:joanne.f.fletcher@wilmu.edu)

**Rene Love PhD DNP PMHNP**  
[renelove@email.arizona.edu](mailto:renelove@email.arizona.edu)

**Kerry Milner DNSc**  
[milnerk@sacredheart.com](mailto:milnerk@sacredheart.com)

**Margie Sipe—DNP RN**  
[msipe@mghihp.edu](mailto:msipe@mghihp.edu)

**Cindy Zellefrow DNP MEd RN LSN PHNA-BC**  
[zellefrow.2@osu.edu](mailto:zellefrow.2@osu.edu)

