

# The Use of Clinical Experience and Case Exemplars in DNP Education

Katie Lothe, DNP, RN, FNP-BC, APNP & Tracy Saladar, DNP, CPNP-PC, PMHS, APNP

701 Highland Ave, Madison, WI 53705 \* 608-263-7443



School of Nursing  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

## Background

As we face the shortage in nursing faculty and the growing number of DNP programs across the country, it is important to examine what faculty experience, and teaching strategies students find most helpful as they prepare to enter into practice. In graduate education, the didactic course often runs simultaneously with the clinical component and students can become overwhelmed with the content and how it translates into practice. It raises the question of how nursing faculty can take the information and make it relevant to clinical practice. At the University of Wisconsin, Madison we have been using clinical case exemplars brought back to the classroom from faculty practice.

## Purpose

The goal of this project was to determine how the use of faculty clinical experience and case exemplars impacted student learning in DNP Education.

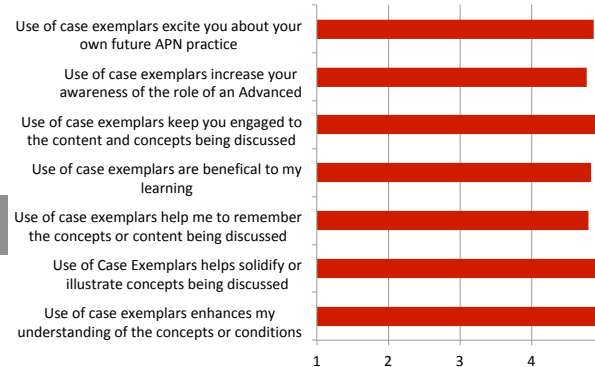


## Methods

An optional survey was sent out to all University of Wisconsin- Madison DNP students who had taken a class taught by the authors of this project in the preceding eighteen months. There were fifteen Likert scale and two open ended questions assessing student perceptions of faculty experience and the use of clinical exemplars as an effective teaching strategy. The survey collected demographic data on what DNP track the student was in and how many years they had practiced as a nurse. The survey was sent to 49 students in total.

## Outcomes

### Potential Benefits of Using Experience and Exemplars



### Importance of Faculty Experience as an Advance Practice Nurse (NP, CNS, CRNA):



## Implications for DNP Education

- Students felt it is important that faculty in the DNP program have worked in the role of an Advanced Practice Nurse.
- Students reported that the use of case exemplars enhanced understanding of concepts, helped them to engage in the classroom, helped them remember concepts, and excited them about their future in the role of an Advanced Practice Nurse.
- Students reported that they would like to see the use of case exemplars used in other courses.
- Students overwhelmingly felt clinical case exemplars were important in their education.

## Additional Findings

- The examples also provide information about how the material covered in the text books and labs need to be integrated with critical thinking and the potential constraints (e.g. limited time and cost considerations) that are faced in practice settings.
- With the amount of textbook content that we are required to absorb, its always nice to be able to relate "real-world" experiences to the many words that we must take in.
- I remember real cases much more clearly than I remember pathophysiology, diagnosis, and treatment of disease processes from a text book
- There is a humanistic component that provided by experiences and exemplars that textbooks lack.
- I'm thankful for the shared stories, it helps me remember broad concepts and think about things in different ways.
- Those cases help me in clinical practice better than any other type of teaching.
- It keeps me engaged and interested

