Abstract: Nursing shortages are not a new problem, but cyclical events occur because of a multitude of factors and issues in our society. However, the consequences of the current prolonged recession will likely have a different affect on the policies and outcomes. Estimates predict that by 2010 there will be a 12% nursing shortage, by 2015 20% and by 2020 there will be a shortage of 800,000 to 1 million nurses in United States (U.S). Nursing schools are being targeted to produce more graduates, yet nursing faculty shortage is the primary reason they turn away qualified applicants each year. In the United States, as life expectancy continues to be extended, there are more acute and chronic health problems creating the need for additional nurses to care for sicker patients. Health care systems and the health of the U.S. will be negatively affected by the nursing shortage if policies are not quickly enacted.

All stakeholders of nursing and health care are actively attempting to attain resources to address the current and impending nursing shortage. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing is â€œworking with schools, policymakers, nursing organizations, and the mediaâ€ leveraging its resources to enact legislation, identify strategies, and form collaborations to address the nursing shortageâ€ (AACN, 2009, p. 1). Buerhaus, et al. (2009, p. 658) recommends the â€œneed to strengthen the current workforce before the recession lifts and imbalances in the supply and demand for RNs reappear.â€ One in three nurses graduates from nursing schools in just six states (California, Texas, New York, Florida, Ohio and Illinois), careful attention must be placed on funding for nursing in these states (Bargagliotti, 2009).
Another option to increase nursing faculty is the use of Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP) and master’s of nursing education graduates into academic positions. The DNP is growing in popularity and availability at more universities. The DNP requires a rigorous clinical project rather than a dissertation and can usually be obtained in 3 years (RWJF, 2007, p. 5). It is not certain if DNP graduates will assist in decreasing the shortage of faculty.