Title: Feasibility Process for New DNP Programs: A Capstone Project

Purpose: In accordance with the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), beginning in 2015 it is recommended that the education for entry into practice of advanced practice nurses will be at the doctoral level. To be compliant with this recommendation, nursing schools will need to make necessary changes. The focus of this presentation would explain how to initiate feasibility process for a Doctorate of Nursing Practice program by completion of a needs assessment survey. This panel of nurse educators will describe the steps, detail recommendations from their experience and evaluate the impact DNP programs will have in nursing practice and education.

Objective 1: Describe the process of initiating a new DNP program feasibility study.

Objective 2: Understand the steps in completing a DNP feasibility study, analyzing assessment data and presenting recommendations to academic administrators.

Objective 3: Discuss the importance of new DNP programs for advanced practice nursing education.

Abstract:

The ANCC recommends that advanced practice nursing educational programs be at the doctoral level by 2015. The focus of this presentation will be to share the experiences of DNP feasibility studies and the establishment of new DNP programs. This will include the completed results of a DNP capstone project. It will emphasize the ANCC recommendations and Essential for DNP Education with regards to preparing APNs at the highest level of nursing to care for individuals, families, groups and communities. The panel of nurse educators will discuss how feasibility studies can determine DNP program demand with regards to local and regional needs of APNs. Upon completion of the feasibility process, the results of assessments will explain the importance of warranting a full analysis by university administrators and stakeholders.

An algorithmic approach will be explained to emphasize the importance of gaining DNP support in academic settings that do not currently award doctoral degrees. The DNP program will require
substantial consideration by all involved stakeholders in the decision making process of each academic institution and administrative bodies. New DNP programs must be supported to meet the increasing demands of professionals in the ever changing and highly complex health care system. Feasibility surveys offer an opportunity to meet the personal career goals of DNP students and allow students the opportunity to expand their knowledge base, become expert clinicians and increase employment opportunities.

The panel will discuss their experiences and recommendations. There will be discussion related to the implications of DNP graduates in practice and education. "The DNP prepared nurses with advanced skills and specialized knowledge in an identified area of nursing practice, including translation of science into practice is critical for nurse educators and APNs at a time when there is a shortage of faculty and primary care providers (Chism, 2010, p. 170). This panel represents nurse educators from 2 different universities in the state of Kansas that jointly deliver the Kansas Primary Care Nurse Practitioner Program. The discussion will emphasize the importance of shared resources and educational opportunities during a recession that has limited funding of higher education programs."