DEVELOPMENT OF A UNIVERSITY-WIDE MENTORING PROGRAM FOR NOVICE NURSING FACULTY
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Submission for Oral Presentation or Poster

Background and Significance: Over the past decade, the literature has been replete with articles that suggest that mentoring may be effective in retaining novice nursing faculty. The components of department and school level mentoring programs at various institutions have been described in the literature (Baker, 2007; Blauvelt & Spath, 2008; White, Brannan, & Wilson, 2010), yet programs developed at the institutional level have not been thoroughly explored.

Purpose of the Study/Project: The purpose of this study was to investigate the process of developing a university-wide mentoring program that would meet the needs of novice nursing faculty at a large, Midwestern university.

Sample/Population: Opportunistic sampling was based on knowledge about the existence and accessibility of a large, Midwestern university that was in the process of developing a formal, university-wide mentoring program.

Framework: Four primary theoretical frameworks were analyzed for their utility in guiding this investigation. None of these theories or models is practical in providing guidance regarding the process or in deducing that mentoring at the university level may meet the needs of novice nursing faculty.

Method/Approach: Program development research using a qualitative methodology and case study approach was performed to gain understanding of the process for developing a formal, university-wide mentoring program that meets the needs of novice nursing faculty.

Results/Outcomes: Through the triangulation of data, the process was found to consist of four steps: development of a nursing college mentoring task force, appointment of a mentoring program coordinator for the nursing college, formation of a university mentoring committee, and appointment of a university-wide mentoring program director. During each of these steps of the process, activities were undertaken. The activities were influenced by factors such as the budget, time, changes in leadership, faculty knowledge, and the literature.

Conclusions/Implications: The development of a formal, university-wide mentoring program that would meet the needs of novice nursing faculty was found to be a dynamic process with several challenges that were presented along the way. Findings from this study suggested that specific program development steps may be used to develop the program. Universities seeking to find potential strategies for improving nursing faculty retention or implementing a mentoring program may use the findings from this study to provide information and guidance.