Diversity in Nursing Academic Faculty: A Purposeful Plan for a Culturally Diverse Nursing Workforce

Rosario Medina PhD, FNP-BC, ACNP, CNS
University of Colorado College of Nursing

Latina M. Brooks, PhD, CNP
Case Western Reserve University
Current State of Diversity in Nursing

• Institute of Medicine’s (IOM) Future of Nursing Report recommended
  • increasing the racial/ethnic diversity of the nursing workforce to address the changing health needs of our society and the associated health inequalities.

• Nursing faculty continue to be predominantly White
  • despite grants and faculty loan programs

• The AACN reported that 12.3 percent of full time faculty in nursing education are from minority backgrounds

• Efforts to create a body of nurses reflecting the plurality of the nation has been insufficient
  • American Association of Nurse Practitioners, 2012; AACN, 2015a
Tri-Level Change to Increase Diversity in Faculty

Nursing:

Students - increase enrollment
  - undergraduate
  - graduate

Workforce
  - representative of the US population
  - clinical
  - administration

Faculty
  - instructors to full professors
Threats to Existence and Persistence of Nursing Faculty in Academia

- Over-representation in committees
  - expectation to represent the minority perspective on various committees
- Advising load
  - expectation to advise all minority students
- Lack of Promotion and Tenure
  - service commitments impeding progress
  - lack of time for scholarship due to service responsibilities
- Burden of being the “voice” of the minority population
Recommendations: Outside of Academic Settings

- Increase access for students
- Reach students in High School Settings to bring awareness of opportunities
- Bridge programs between community colleges and Universities
Recommendations: Within Academic Settings

- Administration (top-bottom)
  - Value driven believe on enrichment with diversity

- Infrastructure built
  - Faculty/ Staff/ Students
Recommendations: Within Academic Settings

- Nursing programs should adopt strategies that align with diversity and inclusion efforts
  - Holistic admissions

- Provide transition programs that increase success in academic settings
Within Academia: Retaining Diverse Faculty

- Evaluation of the processes used to recruit, hire, orient, and retain diverse faculty
- Offering more than one entry route into academia
  - program and the individual of interest to discuss various workload assignments
    - a split workload could be offered to address financial concerns related to the incomparable pay of academia versus clinical practice.
  - academic practice partnership, could be invited to guest lecture or serve as clinical group leaders
  - opportunities to act in the role of visiting professors or consultants
    - allows the demonstration of expertise and leadership skills to help reframe perceptions of diverse faculty.
Recommendation: Within Academic Settings

- Collaborate with Professional Nursing Organizations of Color
- National Association of Hispanic Nursing
- National Association of Black African Nurses
- Minority Serving Institutions
Several organizations of color have mission and/or vision statements that seek to reduce health disparities and strengthen diversity.

- promote the recruitment, retention, and mentoring of nurses of color
- have invested in the ongoing development and nurturing of nurse leaders of color
- strengthen their presence as leaders in policy, academia, and healthcare
Recommendations: Within Academic Settings

- Members of the professional organizations could provide insight
- Structural barriers and interpersonal threats that go unnoticed by others
- Professional organizations of color exposes nursing programs and students with nursing leaders of color from across the nation who are actively engaged in academia, policy development, advocacy, and healthcare.
Strategic Plan has core value on Diversity
Diversity Committee established by administration; composed of all levels
Faculty awareness sessions
  - culturally responsive training to identify sources of overt, covert, and aversive racism
  - dismantling and discouraging academically accustomed behaviors that result in an environment that is unwelcoming.
  - encourage an approach that fosters modeling of cultural responsiveness throughout the institution and curriculum.
  - include ongoing evaluation and modification of diversity efforts for faculty and staff.

(Hassouneh et al., 2012).
Exemplars: University of Colorado Denver

- Holistic Admissions
  - Measurements
    - 38% of increase in diversity of undergraduate students
      - Increase in Males and ethnicity
  - Student surveys
    - Alumnae lived experiences
References


