Use of the ACE Star Model to Explicate the Role of the DNP  
Donna M. Velasquez, PhD, RN, FNP-BC, FAANP  
The University of Arizona

**Problem**: There is a great deal of confusion about the role of the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) by other health professionals and within nursing. The “Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice (2004) describes the role of the DNP as a user of knowledge rather than a creator or builder of knowledge. While the DNP is well-positioned to bridge the theory-practice gap identified by the Institute of Medicine (IOM) (2001), this limited role will do little to solve 21st century healthcare problems.  
**Strategy**: The ACE Star Model of Knowledge Transformation (Stevens, 2004) provides an organizing framework that can be utilized to explicate an expanded role of the DNP in knowledge transformation and provide a framework on which to base curriculum. Knowledge transformation is defined as the conversion of research findings into information useable for clinical decision making. It is envisioned that interprofessional and intraprofessional (PhD and DNP prepared nurses) teams will work together to accomplish the goals delineated in each phase. Teams will be fluid with leadership and members changing as needed. While the “Discovery”, “Summary” and “Translation” phases shown in the model are typically domains of the PhD, DNPs may function in an advisory role or as part of the research team with participation increasing as direct relevance to clinical practice increases. DNPs will be team leaders during the “Integration” phase during which knowledge is implemented into practice. Outcomes are evaluated during the next phase and while knowledge gained during this process is depicted as feeding back to “Discovery”, it is envisioned that an additional phase be added whereby modifications to the organization are made based on evaluative data feeding back to the integration phase.  
**Recommendations/Conclusion**: There has been a lack of organizing frameworks explicating the role of the DNP. The ACE Star Model of Knowledge Transformation provides a parsimonious and congruent model to guide development of the DNP role and curriculum.

