DNP: The Pursuit for Parity
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Problem:
Will the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) ever achieve parity with other health care professionals with clinical practice doctorates in regards to tenure?

Evidence:
The DNP has great potential to promote advanced practice nursing to a new level, but DNPs must be able to gain parity with other clinical practice doctorates (Doctor of Pharmacy, Medical Doctor, Juris Doctor, Education Doctorates, Doctors of Veterinary Medicine) (Upvall & Ptachcinski, 2007). Traditionally, only Doctors of Philosophy (PhD) nursing faculty have achieved equality with other university faculty; however, if universities grant tenure to other practice doctorates then justice demands DNPs also be eligible for tenure (Nicholes & Dyer, 2012).

Strategy/Framework:
Boyer’s Model (1996) serves as the framework for this innovative practice change.

Practice Change:
DNP faculty should be held to the same standards as other tenured faculty members including scholarship, service, and teaching; however, Boyer recommends an expanded definition of scholarship entitled the “scholarship of engagement” which would encompass the clinical practice expertise and the teaching abilities of the DNP (Loomis, Willard, & Cohen, 2006).

Evaluation:
A paradigm shift is needed in academia. One position is DNPs must be held to the same standards as the PhD faculty in regards to traditional teaching, service, and original research (Nicholes & Dyer, 2012) while another position is that the requirements remain unchanged for teaching and service, but the research element must differ. These differences include recognition of the contributions to clinical practice and the use of evidence-based research. Without tenure, the DNPs may not have a voice in university decision making.

Results:
Paradigm shifts for the relatively new DNP degree should begin with an innovative model adapted from other practice doctorates. This model would serve as a conduit in the journey for tenure and recognition in the academic world.

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**Recommendations/Lessons Learned:**
A new model for tenure must be developed for the DNP in order to achieve parity.

**Bibliography:**


