

A Communications Service to Nursing School Deans, Administrators, and Faculty

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EDITOR: JUDITH A. TYLER, MA, RN

NSNA Leadership University – A Practicum in Shared Governance



Diane Mancino

In 1998, the National Student Nurses Association (NSNA) Board of Directors inaugurated the NSNA Leadership University with three alpha sites (Grand View College, Des Moines, Iowa; Golden West College, Huntington Beach, California; and Valencia Community College, Orlando, Florida). In the September 1999 issue of *Dean's Notes*, we rolled out the program to deans and directors nationwide.

The NSNA Leadership University, now entering its fifth year, has hundreds of faculty offering academic credit for their students' involvement in NSNA leadership. *Dean's Notes* invited Dr. Diane J. Mancino, NSNA Executive Director, to answer questions about the program and provide readers with information about how they can get their students and faculty involved.

Q. What is the NSNA Leadership U?

A. The NSNA Leadership U provides opportunities for nursing students to be recognized for the leadership and management skills they develop through participation in NSNA's programs and shared-governance activities. From the school chapter level to the state and national levels, nursing students learn how to work in democratic and cooperative relationships with peers, faculty, students in other disciplines, community service organizations, and the public.

Q. Why is it important for students to learn and practice shared-governance before they enter the profession?

A. There are enormous challenges facing the nursing profession such as the increasing population of older people, the growing shortage of registered nurses, and delivery of nursing service in complex health care settings. It is to the profession's advantage to have new graduates poised to participate in the decision-making process in professional organizations, the workplace, and the policy-making arena. Thanks to the Magnet Recognition Program, through the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), many health care institutions are moving toward shared-governance models at the nursing unit level, giving nurses more control over their practice. Having a working knowledge and previous experience in

shared governance gives new graduates the confidence to participate in decision-making and leadership as soon as they enter the workforce. New graduates today must hit-the-road-running so they can be productive, involved decision makers and providers of nursing care.

Q. What makes the NSNA Leadership University different from traditional universities?

A. NSNA's Leadership U is not a brick and mortar structure – it is a university being created by the students and faculty who participate in NSNA. There is no tuition – all NSNA members may participate in the Leadership U. All they have to do is become active in NSNA's many shared-governance leadership opportunities.

Q. Who may participate?

A. The Leadership U is open to all NSNA members attending nursing programs that prepare students for RN licensure that are official NSNA constituents as well as to members in schools working toward official constituency status.

Q. What are the purposes of the NSNA Leadership U?

A. There are eight primary objectives. These are to:

- Link NSNA participation to professional values development and socialization into the nursing profession.
- Develop competencies that future leaders and managers need to successfully provide for the health care needs of society.
- Guide student learning in shared-governance.
- Validate that learning has taken place.
- Provide formal recognition to NSNA members who demonstrate leadership and management skill development.
- Assist students to develop a professional portfolio.
- Create opportunities for mentor-protégé relationships and peer networks to develop and grow.
- Recognize faculty who support student participation in the NSNA Leadership U and students who have received NSNA Leadership U credit with a personalized certificate.

Q. How does the NSNA Leadership U work?

A. From the basic skills needed to participate in shared-governance meetings at the school chapter level to the honor of serving on the NSNA Board of Directors, the NSNA Leadership U offers endless possibilities to develop professionalism in students. The approach used must conform to academic and administrative policies and tradi-

tions of the specific nursing program. We offer the following step-by-step approach to incorporate NSNA's leadership U in your school of nursing curriculum.

Step One: The nursing program must be an official constituent of the NSNA. However, if the school is not an official constituent, it is possible that a student who joins NSNA and initiates an NSNA chapter is eligible to participate. Students must be NSNA members to participate.

Step Two: Students who wish to participate should take the initiative to explore how NSNA participation can either qualify for credit as part of required or elective course work, independent study, or volunteer service hours that many colleges and universities require. Faculty may also recognize NSNA involvement as an option for the fulfillment of course requirements. There are schools that now offer an NSNA Leadership University course for academic credit, and students register and pay tuition to receive credit. For example, a one-credit Leadership Development course created by Dr. Cheryl Schmidt and her colleagues at the University of Arkansas for Health Sciences "provides students an opportunity to earn academic credit for active involvement in the local, state, and/or national levels of NSNA." Another example is the Miami Dade Community College Scholars Program where Dr. Carol Petrozella offers academic credit for participation in NSNA Community Health Projects. The syllabi for these courses and others can be downloaded from the Leadership Library faculty Web site (www.nsnaleadershipu.org).

Step Three: Once the proper connection is made between those involved (i.e. student, faculty, administration, chapter advisor), and there is agreement that credit will be awarded for participation in the NSNA Leadership U, a formal meeting is scheduled for the student and a faculty mentor (this could be the NSNA chapter faculty advisor). At this first meeting, the student and mentor need to review the course requirements and the NSNA Leadership U materials; establish learning objectives and outcomes; determine how guided leadership learning will proceed (assign preceptors if available); select appropriate reading and other learning materials; and develop a written plan to meet the objectives through NSNA participation.

Step Four: Validation that the outcomes have been achieved is the responsibility of the faculty mentor. Options may include having the student keep a detailed journal that is reviewed by the faculty mentor; develop a professional portfolio describing the leadership activities of the student; create a Power Point presentation of the leadership experience for the class and faculty; or write an article on their NSNA Leadership University experience that can be submitted for publication. Evaluation of performance based on the preceptor or mentor's observations is another appropriate option to determine if the student can actually demonstrate their mastery of the objectives.

Step Five: NSNA must then be notified that the objectives and course requirements have been satisfactorily completed and that credit was awarded. The student completes the NSNA Leadership U Certificate Request Form and submits it to NSNA.

Step Six: In the last semester of the student's senior year, NSNA provides a certificate of recognition acknowledging the student's participation in the NSNA Leadership U. The certificate is presented at the NSNA Annual Awards Ceremony or it

can be mailed to a faculty member to present to the student at the appropriate time (i.e. during pinning ceremony). The faculty member who awarded the academic credit also receives a personalized certificate of recognition.

Q. What are some examples of NSNA leadership activities that students can become involved in?

A. One of many possible examples is serving as a school chapter delegate in the NSNA House of Delegates. This provides students opportunities to practice shared governance using *Robert's Rules of Order* and to demonstrate their mastery of leadership theory learned in the classroom. Another example is the planning and implementation of a community health project sponsored by the student nurses association and the nursing program. Students gain leadership skills as they organize the community health project and may also gain clinical skills depending on the nature of the project (i.e. health fair). By serving on a school or state student nurses' association board of directors, students learn what fiduciary responsibility and accountability means. These activities are a practicum in leadership and are most effective when learning is guided.

Another example is from Grand View College in Des Moines, Iowa. The faculty, led by Dr. Jean Logan, chairperson, incorporates the NSNA Leadership U throughout the curriculum. In Professionalism I, for example, students form teams to research and write resolutions on current nursing issues. They hold a mock convention to present and defend the resolutions and then vote on which resolutions are presented at the state and national House of Delegates. Having students involved in this type of leadership activity early in their education creates a culture that inspires involvement throughout their undergraduate education.

Q. What is planned for the NSNA Leadership University in the coming year?

A. A lot of work remains to be done to guide students in their learning and practice of shared governance. The NSNA Board of Directors is developing a "Shared-Governance Tool Kit" to foster understanding and to improve the practice of shared governance. Over 150 students and faculty participated in "Governance Tool Kit" focus groups that were held at the 2003 NSNA Annual Convention in Phoenix. The focus groups discussed case studies and developed plans to address issues related to ethics, fiduciary responsibility of Boards, bylaws and policy development, organizational communication, parliamentary procedure, and conflict resolution. We believe that the "Shared-Governance Tool Kit" will be very useful to faculty as well as to NSNA student leaders.

Q. How do you spread the word about the NSNA Leadership University to students and faculty?

A. In addition to using NSNA's communication vehicles (*Imprint*, *NSNA News*, *Getting the Pieces to Fit*, www.nсна.org, www.nsnaleadershipu.org, and broadcast e-mail), the NSNA Board of Directors, staff, and several involved faculty advisors have presented the NSNA Leadership University at conferences, conventions, and workshops. I have had the pleasure of presenting work-

shops at the National League for Nursing Education Summits and in November, I will present "Supporting Student Leadership," at the American Association of Colleges of Nursing Baccalaureate Education Conference in San Antonio, Texas. This past spring, I was invited to contribute a chapter entitled "Teaching and Learning Shared Governance," in *Teaching Nursing: The Art and Science*, edited by Linda Caputi and Lynn Engelmann and published by the College of DuPage Press, Illinois.

Over the past two years, nursing leaders have contacted NSNA and the Foundation of the NSNA to offer support for leadership development. An annual Leadership Lecture, established by the RWJ Executive Nurse Fellows Fund, takes place at the NSNA Convention. The focus on leadership development will soon expand to a formal mentorship program that connects the RWJ Executive Nurse Fellows with NSNA leaders. The Marilyn Bagwell Leadership Development Fund (see separate story in this issue), helps raise funds to support school chapter leaders attendance at state and national student conventions. Both of these programs are part of the Foundation of the NSNA's Promise of Nursing Endowment Fund. We are also working with the American Organization of Nurse Executives to create opportunities for students and nurse executives to interact.

Q. Is there anything else you would like to share with deans and directors?

A. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many deans and directors who support faculty and student involvement in NSNA. I hope that many more will encourage faculty to offer students academic credit for their involvement in NSNA. Ideally, we would like every nursing program to be part of the NSNA Leadership University.

I know that research is an important part of every college and university mission. Faculty investigating leadership development may find that NSNA leaders are a rich data source. Please inform your faculty and graduate students who have an interest in studying leadership development in nursing students to consider working with NSNA to collect data.

I challenge all nurse educators and academic leaders to be mentors and to foster the professional development of nursing students and prepare them to not only be excellent entry-level practitioners, but to also be outstanding entry-level nurse leaders.

Thank you for all that you do for nursing education and to advance the profession of nursing.

For more information, visit www.nsnaleadershipu.org or contact Dr. Diane Mancino, Executive Director at diane@nsna.org

Diane J. Mancino, EdD, RN, CAE, is executive director of the National Student Nurses Association and the Foundation of the NSNA.

Join us in New Orleans for NSNA's MidYear Conference

The 21st Annual MidYear Conference takes place November 13-15, 2003, in New Orleans, LA. The conference offers nursing students and faculty a broad selection of activities, including workshops, panels, exhibits, and an NCLEX® Review to help prepare our future nurse leaders.

MidYear Highlights

Thursday, November 13: Opening and Keynote Address given by Donna Cardillo. Donna Cardillo, president, Cardillo & Associates, Professional Development Seminars. Sponsored by Anthony J. Jannetti, Inc., Pitman, NJ.

Friday, November 14: A "New Directions in Nursing" panel will feature interactive dialogue with the audience about trends and issues in the nursing profession. The panel moderated by Dr. K. Lynn Wieck, CEO Management Solutions for Healthcare, Katy, TX, and President of the Texas Nurses Association, includes representatives from the American Nurses Association, National League for Nursing, American Association of Colleges of Nursing, the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, and the American Organization of Nurse Executives.

Saturday, November 15: Breakfast buffet and presentation on leadership presented by General William Bester, Chief, Army Nurse Corps sponsored by the U.S. Army Recruiting Command, Army Nurse Corps. Two panels titled "Nursing Specialty Showcase" will open the door to opportunities in a broad range of specialty nursing areas.

Faculty Workshops

Faculty workshops offering continuing education credit are presented throughout the conference:

- Networking breakfast session on Computerized Information Resources for Education sponsored by CINAHL Information Systems
- Creating Better Online Teaching Tools, Tips, and Techniques, sponsored by Nursing Education Consultants
- Concept Maps in Clinical Settings, sponsored by Youngstown State University
- Incorporating Technology in Your Presentations, sponsored by Delmar Learning
- Moving Mountains: Power, Policy, and Politics for Nurses, with Dr. Lynn Wieck

There will also be a State Consultants and Faculty Advisors workshop led by Eunice Cole, ANA Appointed Consultant to NSNA and Barbara Chamberlain, NLN Appointed Consultant to NSNA.

Registration Fee for Faculty Advisors/Consultants of \$55/advance; \$70 on site.

For conference details and to register online, visit www.nsna.org

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Editor Judith A. Tyler, MA, RN
President, NSNA Matthew Arant
Executive Director Diane Mancino, EdD, RN, CAE
Art Director Jack Bryant
Publisher Anthony J. Jannetti
Advisory Board . . . Barbara Chamberlain, MSN, APRN, BC, ANP

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NSNA NEWS

***Not for Ourselves, But for Others* Wins 4 Video Awards**

Not for Ourselves, But For Others, a dynamic video documentary highlighting NSNA's 50-year journey from a revolutionary idea to a powerful association, won three major media awards this spring. The video, produced by Envision, Inc., Nashville, TN, is based on the historical research of the Executive Director, Dr. Diane J. Mancino.

The video was recognized as the Winner in the Documentary category for the 2003 Aegis Awards (www.aegisawards.com), a Bronze award in the "Film and Video Production-Biographical" category in this year's Worldfest Houston International Film Festival (www.worldfest.org), a Bronze award in the HeSCA (Health Sciences Communications Association Media Festival (www.hesca.org/medfest.htm), and a Gold Award in the Aurora Awards, an international competition for excellence in film and video.

The video and companion book, *50 Years of the National Student Nurses' Association*, are available for purchase from NSNA. Call (718) 210-0705 for ordering information

NSNA Web Site Gets a Facelift!

NSNA's web site, www.nсна.org was redesigned this spring, with a refreshing new home page, detailed index bars for easy navigation, an expanded links section, and more. Use

the **Member Services** icon to update your membership profile, join, and register for NSNA's conferences. Visit the site today and give us your feedback! (Thanks to our sponsor, Delmar Learning.)

Barbara Chamberlain Appointed NLN Consultant to NSNA

Barbara Chamberlain, MSN, APRN, BC assistant professor of nursing, Drexel University, Philadelphia, was recently appointed by the NSNA Board of Directors as the National League for Nursing consultant to NSNA. See press releases on www.nсна.org for more details

NSNA Convention in Nashville

The 52nd Annual Convention of the NSNA is scheduled for March 31 – April 3, 2004, in the Gaylord Opryland Hotel and Convention Center in Nashville, Tennessee. Keynote speaker Barbara Blakeney, MS, APRN, BC, ANP, President of the American Nurses Association, will address the convention theme *NSNA: We Make the Path by Walking It*. The annual convention offers plenary sessions, focus sessions, exhibits, awards ceremony, social events, association activity seminars, and several workshops offered to faculty for continuing education.