

**The NEXus Collaborative and
PhD/DNP Education**




Presenters:

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Purpose


Discuss characteristics of NEXus, a successful doctoral education consortium/ collaborative.

- Briefly describe the history, purpose, and development of the NEXus collaborative
- Discuss successful processes and documents that promote the development of a doctoral collaborative
- Review NEXus website and course catalogue.




Background

- Shrinking resources in doctoral nursing education provided an impetus for partnership and collaboration efforts.
- To address this goal the Nursing Education Xchange (**NEXus**) began in 2004



- Created a partnership among 4 select Western universities offering distance (online) doctoral courses in nursing to students enrolled in collaborating universities.
- The project has now expanded nationally to include 16 institutions granting PhD and/or DNP degrees in nursing.



Members

- Academic Collaborators
 - Both send and teach students within the collaboration
- Academic Affiliates
 - Send students to take courses from academic collaborators.

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Member Institutions

Academic Collaborators (* = founding member)	
Arizona State University	Univ. of Nevada Las Vegas
Idaho State University	University of New Mexico
Loma Linda University	University of No. Colorado*
Oregon Health & Science Univ.*	University of Texas at Tyler
University at Buffalo	University of Utah*
University of Colorado*	Virginia Commonwealth Univ.
University of Kansas	

Academic Affiliates	
The University of Oklahoma	Washington State University

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Getting Started: Grant Support

- 2004 – 2008: Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, U.S. Department of Education (FIPSE #P116B040822).
- 2008 – 2012: US Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (D09HP09070).

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Operational Consultation

- Initial consultation from Midwestern collaborative: GP IDEA
- GP IDEA and WICHE consultants participated in a crucial meeting in Boulder, CO of the campus administrative teams, including deans, graduate deans, registrars, financial aid, NEXus consortium representatives.

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- GP IDEA staff conducted a faculty survey to determine which content area was most needed:
 - Geriatrics, nursing education, diverse and vulnerable populations, and informatics were identified as priorities by NEXus academic collaborators.

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GP IDEA's Strategies Considered for NEXus

- The student's transcript is developed and diploma awarded at the home institution without need for credit transfer between institutions.
- Students pay the "Common Price" per credit hour regardless of the home or teaching institution.
- Revenue is distributed among the home institution, teaching institution and central alliance management to ensure sustainable programs and alliance.

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NEXus Differs from GP IDEA

- NEXus does not offer common degrees or programs.
- Each member offers its own degrees, but consortium offers a course exchange to students of academic collaborating institutions.




What makes NEXus work?

- **Guiding Principles:**
 - document outlining philosophical approach and principles underlying the collaborative
- **Memorandum of Understanding:**
 - the agreement signed by campus deans and administrators
- **Bylaws, Policies, and Procedures:**
 - the operating procedures that provide structure to the collaborative



Tuition and Revenue Sharing

- Tuition Common Price and Tuition Split: reflects efforts of teaching courses, sending students from home institution, and sustaining the collaborative
 - **75%** tuition returns to teaching institution
 - **10%** to home institution
 - **15%** to NEXus administration



Who makes NEXus work?

- **Campus Faculty Coordinator**
 - Local NEXus resource, knows courses and faculty at home institution (university where student is enrolled)
- **Campus Staff Coordinator**
 - Assists students with enrollment, communication with teaching institution, registration, transcripts

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- Deans, campus administrative teams
- Students and Faculty
- WIN Central Staff
 - Project Director
 - Project Coordinator

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Other Successful Strategies

- Strong communication among collaborators, faculty, NEXus staff
 - supports student-friendly process
 - facilitates participation of member schools
- Institutional team (e.g., Registrar, Bursar, Financial Aid Director, Graduate Deans, Librarians)
 - supports NEXus within the university

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Strengths of Doctoral Collaboration

- Trust built among collaborators
- Support of institutional team
- New partners and their administrators are oriented to, and accept, *Guiding Principles*, policies and procedures
- Student friendly
- Administrative model and staffing

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What Happens In a Nutshell

- Teaching institution offers distance accessible courses open to PhD, DNP students, or both
- Teaching institution designates number of open seats
- NEXus course catalog can be sorted by institution, cluster and/or term
- Cluster committees facilitate quality offerings

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- Home Faculty Advisor and student select courses
- Student registers, assisted by Campus Staff Coordinator
- Teaching institution teaches course
- Student requests transcript
- Revenue split assessed by NEXus staff assisted by Campus Staff Coordinator and finance staff

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161 Courses Organized into Clusters


• Nursing Education	• Chronic & Disabling Conditions and Palliative Care
• Diverse and Vulnerable Populations	• Research Methods
• Gerontology and Geriatric Nursing	• Scholarship and Writing
• Systems, Leadership Informatics, and Policy	• Advanced Nursing Practice*
• Nursing Knowledge Development: Theory, Philosophy and Science	• Scientific Underpinnings for Advanced Nursing Practice*
	• Ethics and Interprofessional Collaboration*

*DNP Specific




NEXus Benefits to Students

- Provides students with large choice of electives.
- Supports 'off-sequence' students with needed coursework.
- Student learns a variety of distance education models and delivery methods.
- Access to leaders and expert faculty nationally recognized in their fields.



NEXus Benefits to Faculty

- NEXus students in courses enrich the class discussion and diversity
- Students receive services of both teaching and home institution (e.g., library, online platform)
- Home institution teaching, grading and course policies prevail, remain consistent
- NEXus Staff and Faculty Coordinators support teaching faculty



Ultimate goal

Moving the collaborative into a sustainable and productive educational innovation that:

- Increases the capacity of doctoral education
- Facilitates student progression
- Contributes to doubling number of doctorally prepared nurses by 2020 (IOM Future of Nursing)

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Setting the NEXus Common Price

- Lowest Price \$ 339 \$ 545
- Highest Price \$1,065 \$1,694
- 66%ile of difference \$ 823 \$1,311
- 75%ile of difference \$ 883.50 \$1,407

2012-2013 NEXus Price = \$750/semester cr
(\$500/quarter cr)

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Funding Model: Collaborators

- Distribution per credit:
 - 75% teaching institution (\$562.50)
 - 10% student’s home institution (\$75)
 - 15% NEXus administration (\$112.50)

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Funding Model: Affiliates

- Distribution per credit:
 - 75% teaching institution (\$562.50)
 - 25% NEXus administration (\$187.50)



Membership Dues 2013-14

Academic Collaborators

- Base Dues \$5,000
- First-year New Member's Premium \$1,000
- Each Additional Program \$1,000



Membership Dues

Academic Affiliates

- Base Dues \$6,000
- First-year New Member's Premium \$1,000
- Each Additional Program \$1,000



NEXus Growth

- Institutional membership
 - more than tripled, from 4 to 16
- Course offerings
 - from 30 to 161
- Student enrollments
 - quadrupled: 20 to 84 in 2010-11 and have maintained since then
 - 249 total students and 316 total enrollments

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Get the Message Out!

- Dues recovered by enrolling as few as **six** NEXus students/year into PhD and/or DNP courses
- Savings:
 - Course development
 - Cover courses with faculty loss
 - Ease independent study workload

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Revenue for NEXus Members

- Range: \$1,050 to \$16,621
- Average income: \$5,613

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State Authorization of Distance Education

- State authority for regulating institutions offering education within state boundaries
- Regardless of modality!
- If found non-compliant:
 - State: Cease and desist action
 - Federal (if reinstated): Reimburse aid funds



Consortia Agreements

- If a student from one institution (Home) takes required coursework from an institution located in another state (Teaching), that coursework is considered part of the program offered by the first institution (Home).



Key Points

- Student must not be required to enroll separately in the out-of-state (Teaching) institution—NEXus enrollment mechanism bypasses separate institutional enrollment
- Member institutions are seeking approvals for distance programs from most states



Future

- Monitor through **WCET**, the WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies
- Encourage NEXus institutions to be authorized in other members' states
- Monitor the emerging reciprocity agreement.



New Members Enrich Collaborative

- NEXus welcomes new members
- Expanding variety of course offerings and specialties (e.g. gerontology)
- Expanded opportunities for students
- Expanded networking for faculty
- Enriches value of the collaborative



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